

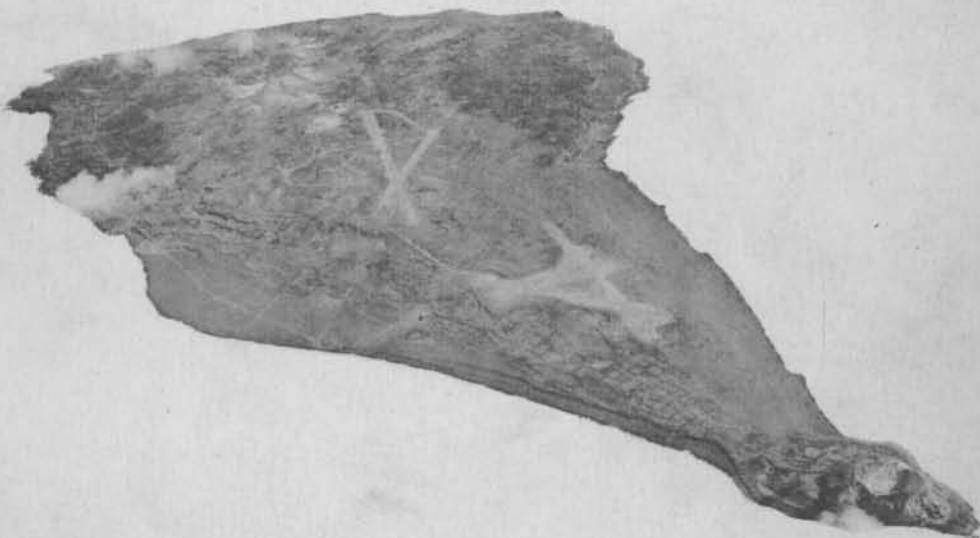
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Report of

IWO JIMA OPERATION



COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO

CTF 53 AND CTG 51.21

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A16-3(3)
Serial 046

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2 April 1945

From: Commander Amphibious Group TWO (CTF 53 and CTG 51.21).
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet (CTF 51).
(2) Commander FIFTH Fleet (CTF 50).
(3) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and
Pacific Ocean Areas.

Subject: IWO JIMA Operation - Report of.

Reference: (a) Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 1 CL-45
dated 1 January 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Commander Amphibious Group TWO (CTF 53
and CTG 51.21) Report of IWO JIMA Operation.

1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (A) is forwarded
herewith.

2. A summary of the operation follows:

(a) PREPARATION FOR THE ASSAULT

(1) The planning for the IWO JIMA operation commenced in October. A very complete set of photographs was available at that time which were augmented continually during the planning period. Excellent photographic coverage was provided. Early in the planning period, Commodores McGOVERN and FLANAGAN, who had been designated as Transport Squadron Commanders, were ordered to PEARL HARBOR and their presence aided materially in the early preparation of plans.

(2) Practically all vessels assigned to the operation were new, with no combat experience. In many cases their late delivery from the building yards necessitated their proceeding to the Hawaiian Area without even the benefit of their indoctrinal training on the West Coast. As opportunity permitted they were put through an intensive training schedule in the Hawaiian Area, but the training time allotted was insufficient for real benefit. A beach party school was established at WAIMANALO and all beach parties given about five days training there which was most helpful.

(3) Three divisions of LCI(M)'s became available for about three weeks before rehearsal and they were utilized to the maximum extent in mortar fire training and the development of type methods of fire, particularly night interdiction fire. The methods and procedure developed here proved very satisfactory during the subsequent assault phases.

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(4) A Corps Shore Party, consisting of the 8th Field Depot, was established and conducted valuable training. Generous and adequate numbers of cranes, trucks, bulldozers, and other landing equipment were obtained and shipping space allocated for this most important adjunct of landing operations.

(5) A careful study was made of both the eastern and western beaches of IWO JIMA and plans were prepared for the landing on either side as the weather might dictate. It was apparent that the beaches and beach areas were of extremely soft and shifting sand, which, coupled with their steep gradient and high banks just inshore, indicated that considerable difficulty would be experienced in landing vehicles.

(6) In anticipation of this trouble a large number of runner sleds were provided. In addition the shore party developed and tested a means of hinging marston matting and assembled it in fifty foot units "accordion pleated" (see Pictorial Record page 13). Altogether more than eight miles of this matting were prepared and loaded on sleds in such a manner as to make it available for quick use on the beaches. This proved to be a lifesaver and was responsible to a large degree for the early rapid supply of assault requirements.

(7) The loading in the Hawaiian Area followed generally along standard pattern. APA's averaged about 500 tons and AKA's about 2200 tons. LST's carried the usual preloads of priority supplies and naval ammunition. LSM's were loaded to a total of 260 short tons. Due to the excessive weight (40 tons) of the M4A3 tank, plans for embarking these in LCM(3)'s in LSD's had to be changed. Some of the tanks were embarked in LCT's and others in LSM's made available for the purpose.

(8) Five days were allotted to rehearsals in the Hawaiian Area and two days for rehearsals off TINIAN. These rehearsals were extremely beneficial and were none too long.

(9) A very careful check was kept upon the weather at IWO JIMA by all agencies concerned and during the movement to the objective it was apparent that the primary plan of landing on the eastern beaches could be utilized.

(b) ASSAULT PHASE

(10) On DOG Day all units arrived exactly on schedule. The weather was fine and the sea smooth. The debarkation of troops and the movement of assault waves proceeded without hitch and the landing was effected on time. Excellent supporting gunfire was delivered, which is more fully described in CTF 51's report. Practically no enemy gunfire was

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seen to fall among the boat waves during their approach to the beach.

(11) At the beach our troubles began. Many of the LVT's and LVT(A)'s temporarily bogged down in the soft sand and were swamped by a steep, quick-breaking single line of breakers about four feet high. Some tanks stripped their tracks while trying to make a turn in this soft sand after debarkation from LSM's. LCVP's and LCM's, although beaching initially without difficulty, were swamped either by a large wave breaking over their sterns or by a heavy backwash of surf rushing in over their ramps. These boats broached and by the end of DOG Day the beaches were almost completely blocked by various types of craft.

(12) The ordinary salvage facilities provided by LCPR's were completely inadequate to take care of this situation and the subsequent clearing of the beaches was made extremely difficult by the fact that the surf quickly filled these boats with sand and also built a bar of sand around them. (See Pictorial Record pages 8 & 9).

(13) All beaches were subject to heavy mortar fire, particularly GREEN and BLUE Beaches on the flanks. This fire persisted on all beaches for four days and considerably longer on the northern beaches. Casualties in beach parties, shore parties, and shore party equipment were high and all work on the beaches was performed under difficult conditions.

(14) The fine weather prevailing on DOG Day soon deteriorated. By DOG plus ONE the wind had veered around to the east and it became impossible to discharge any landing craft smaller than LCT's. This condition prevailed generally throughout the entire period, causing rough seas in the transport areas, and creating anticipated difficulties in unloading. LCT's, LSM's, and LST's were utilized to the maximum extent on a 24-hour basis. In the rough water they suffered considerable damage alongside, and a critical shortage of fenders and lines developed. But by the determination, adaptability, and cheerful effort of officers and crews, the work continued without stop throughout the entire unloading period.

(15) Considerable damage resulted also to these vessels on the beach. They were being called into small areas of clean beach flanked by wreckage of all types, and in many instances struck this wreckage or submerged obstacles, receiving considerable hull damage. A strong current along the beach and poor holding ground caused a considerable number of broachings and the fouling of anchors of adjacent ships. In addition, cargo nets and beach flotsam of all types carried out by the swift undertow fouled screws of innumerable vessels while discharging cargo.

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(16) To meet this situation, the limited facilities of the Service and Salvage Group, the docking facilities of three LSD's, and the availability of the LCS(L)'s provided off each beach for salvage purposes, were taxed to the utmost. The Underwater Demolition Teams rendered valuable assistance in clearing the beaches, but there was a definite requirement for a larger and better equipped salvage unit. Recommendations regarding this are made in subsequent parts of this report and will also be made the subject of special correspondence.

(17) On DOG plus TWO Day it was considered that circumstances were such that general unloading could commence on the next day, and on this assumption, decision was made to launch pontoon barges carried by certain LST's. Four barges had been launched on DOG Day for use by evacuation control LST's and these had functioned in a satisfactory manner. Therefore seventeen additional barges were launched in the afternoon and early evening of DOG plus TWO. This proved to be an unfortunate decision. Weather conditions deteriorated with wind velocity increasing to 25 knots, with the result that the barges could not be used. Numerous barges on launching were unable to operate under their own power. The only anchorage then available would block the beaches in use, and it became necessary that they either be towed by launching ships or by salvage vessels. In the existing seaway they could not be properly handled by LCI types or LCM's, and during the next three days they were a subject of much concern. They continually broke their moorings and went adrift, either on the beach, where they not only blocked the badly needed beach access, but also set up a hazard to ships already beached, or drifted to sea to become a menace to navigation and a salvage problem. In future operations pontoon barges should not be launched unless or until a smooth water anchorage area is available. The foregoing remarks apply in equal force to pontoon causeway sections.

(18) On DOG plus ELEVEN surf conditions made all operations on the eastern beaches extremely hazardous. Meanwhile reconnaissances of the western beaches showed surf conditions satisfactory there. As soon as a by-passed enemy pocket of resistance had been mopped up, mines were cleared and a road constructed down to the southern extremity of the western beaches. The first ship ordered to discharge across these beaches was an ammunition ship, COLUMBIA VICTORY, which was unloading by DUKW's. As she steamed for an anchorage in the lee of MOUNT SURIBACHI, a heretofore unlocated CD battery opened up, and salvos landed all about her as she retired in haste, but fortunately did only superficial damage. Fire support vessels quickly knocked out that battery and the next day several vessels commenced unloading on this beach, using LCT's and DUKW's. Subsequently other ships were shifted to the western anchorage to utilize the lee for loading into LSM's and LCT's, which then returned to the eastern beaches for unloading.

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(19) In spite of all the difficulties, both afloat and ashore, the unloading progressed very satisfactorily and by DOG plus SIX the daily rate of discharge had reached a total of approximately 8,000 tons. Most of the unloading, except as noted in preceding paragraphs, was done over the eastern beaches although full advantage was taken of the western anchorage for unloading from transports and other landing craft whenever conditions warranted. By DOG plus FIFTEEN three transport squadrons, with the exception of a few corps and garrison loaded vessels, had completed unloading and had departed.

(20) On 14 March (DOG plus TWENTYTHREE) the Japanese resistance had been reduced to a small pocket in the THIRD and FOURTH Divisions' areas of responsibility and a sizeable pocket at the north tip of the island, and the U.S. Flag was raised on IWO JIMA. On 16 March (DOG plus TWENTYFIVE) all organized resistance was declared to have ceased.

(21) Reembarkation was commenced immediately of the FOURTH Division, followed by the FIFTH Division and Corps. Withdrawal of the latter division was delayed until a stubborn pocket of resistance in the northwest corner of the island had been cleaned out.

(22) On 26 March the capture and occupation phase was declared to be completed, and responsibility for the defense and development of IWO JIMA was assumed by Commander Forward Area.

(c) GENERAL NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE OPERATION

(23) Small Boat Control

Having experienced difficulty in previous operations with small boats left in the area at night during the assault period, after parent ships had retired, a Small Craft Group was organized to administer and care for miscellaneous small craft. Boats left in the area by retiring ships were directed to the Small Craft Group Commander for securing and berthing and messing of crews, for which two LST(M)'s were available after DOG Day. This system proved highly satisfactory and is recommended for future operations.

(24) Evacuation of Casualties

The evacuation of casualties during this operation showed a marked improvement over any previous operations of this group. Great care had been taken in thoroughly briefing all medical personnel involved before the operation commenced and in providing special medical equipment such as whole blood, which was used here for the first time. Four LST's were outfitted for use as casualty evacuation ships and a large medical staff placed on board. Shortly after HOW Hour these vessels each launched one

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3x12 barge and secured it alongside and moved to a position close to the control vessel off each regimental beach. Casualties coming from the beach, principally in DUKW's and LVT's, were taken aboard the barge and thence by crane to the LST where they were given early medical treatment and then evacuated to transports by LCVP's. During the operation these four vessels handled an approximate total of 6136 casualties and unquestionably contributed materially to saving many lives. The OZARK (LSV 1) proved her worth in handling of casualties. Prior to the operation extra medical personnel had been placed aboard her and on her departure she evacuated a total of 407 casualties.

The lack of hospital facilities ashore was a source of constant concern because of the possibility of bad weather prohibiting embarkation of casualties. It is recommended that every effort be made, particularly in a situation such as this where no suitable harbor was available, to establish hospital facilities ashore at the earliest practicable time.

Transfer during darkness of casualties from the evacuation control LST's to designated APA's created difficulties which require further solution. LCVP's used for this purpose in many instances had great difficulty in locating the vessel to which directed. Ships designated to receive casualties should display distinctive light groups for this purpose at all times except when danger of air raid or enemy gunfire exists. Transport Squadron Commanders must take positive steps to assure that evacuation control LST's are kept fully informed regarding the designation of ships allocated for receiving casualties. As a general rule night transfers should be reduced to a minimum.

(25) Control of Unloading Operations

Headquarters for unloading operations were consolidated in U.S.S. AUBURN as soon as it was practicable to do so. Commencing on DOG plus SEVEN Day the senior commanders of LST's, LSM's, and LCT's present moved aboard with their staffs and set up headquarters. Later, prior to the time the Port Director was to assume responsibility for discharging of garrison shipping, his headquarters were also established aboard the AUBURN, where he remained until his facilities were available on shore. This procedure enabled the Attack Force Commander to keep close control over all unloading and also provided the Port Director with experience so that the transfer of unloading responsibility was effected with maximum efficiency. It simplified control and greatly reduced the communication traffic load. This procedure is recommended for future use.

(26) Reembarkation Procedure

When the responsibility of all garrison unloading was transferred

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to the Island Commander, on DOG plus TWENTYFOUR, a definite allocation of unloading craft and beaches was made to the Port Director for garrison use. Remaining craft and beaches were retained for troop reembarkation, which proceeded concurrently with unloading operations of garrison forces. This arrangement resulted in a minimum of confusion and expedited overall accomplishment of the operation. One beach and control party from an assault transport squadron was retained for use during troop reembarkation, since GroPac beach party did not include sufficient personnel to take over both troop reembarkation and garrison unloading functions.

(27) Pontoon Barges and Causeways

The difficulty with pontoon barges and causeways have been discussed elsewhere in this report and also in the report of CTF 51. In future operations the following instructions should govern:

- (a) They should not be launched in rough sea conditions.
- (b) If any doubt exists, a few should be launched at a time until operating conditions are definitely determined.
- (c) Procedure should be developed for assuring that engines are in operating condition prior to launching.
- (d) A towing bridle should be provided. The sharp edges of pontoon sections quickly chafe through ordinary towing gear.
- (e) All barges and causeways should have their numbers clearly painted on both sides and on the deck for identification in case of breakdown and subsequent salvaging.
- (f) Plans should prescribe a definite anchorage and beach area for these structures.

(28) Salvage Organizations

The rough weather and treacherous beach conditions created a beach salvage problem which far exceeded the capacity of the usual organization set up to handle it.

As our operations progress toward the Japanese homeland, rough weather conditions will generally prevail and immediate steps should be taken to perfect and expand our beach salvage organization.

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A special beach salvage group should be organized. Vessels of that group should include small tugs, YTB's, LCI types, and specially equipped LCM's carrying pumps, shallow water diving units, and underwater burning outfit. This organization would be augmented during the assault phase by LCP(L)'s or LCPR's provided by Transport Squadron Commanders for minor salvage work on their own beaches.

In addition to the above, each assault transport should provide a mobile repair unit capable of above-water welding and minor hull and engine repair to landing craft afloat.

(29) Prevention of Alongside Damage

In the rough sea conditions prevailing at IWO JIMA the LST's, LSM's, LCT's, and smaller craft suffered extensive damage while alongside larger vessels. All available fenders were soon carried away and makeshift fenders proved inadequate. Cane fenders themselves caused considerable damage because of their small pressure area. Mounting lugs for causeways and pontoon barges on the sides of LST's were a particular source of damage to vessels and smaller craft alongside. In future operations it is most important that each large ship and LST be provided with suitable fenders or small camels.

(30) Beach Control

Although operating under unusually difficult conditions at IWO JIMA and under heavy enemy gunfire, it is considered that the coordination between beachmasters and the offshore control vessels was not satisfactory. The following specific points require improvement:

(a) A simplified visual system of calling boats to the beach must be provided. This must include lights for night signalling and range lights for the beaching of larger craft.

(b) A more positive means must be established by control vessels of determining at night what landing craft are in their vicinity waiting for beaching instructions. Particularly during the early phases of assault, night signalling is dangerous and must be kept to a minimum. Radio communication proved only partly satisfactory. On one beach the control officer had an LCPR tender which cruised the area and contacted orally each arriving craft. This proved very satisfactory.

(c) All requests from the troops on shore for materials or supplies must be channelized through the control vessels. In this operation as in preceding ones, there has been a marked tendency

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for troop commanders to send their requests direct to the ships concerned or to the higher echelons without notification to the control officer and embarked troop representative. This results in loaded craft arriving at the control vessel without any knowledge for their need on the part of the control officer.

(31) Beach Parties

The beach condition at IWO JIMA stressed the weakness of our present beach party organization. Practically all members of the beach parties were engaged in their first combat experience. The beach conditions were unusually tough and would have challenged the resourcefulness and efficiency of the most highly trained organization. Successful beach operation under these conditions is an extremely difficult task and it is believed essential that permanent organizations be set up to handle this problem.

Initially it is recommended that a small group of key beach party personnel be constituted and trained in all angles of rough water work and that during an operation they be placed in complete charge of the beaches, supplemented by the required personnel of existing beach parties now aboard transports. Ultimately an organization should be built up corresponding more or less to that of the underwater demolition teams. Such an organization would become highly skilled in beach party work, and would develop a high morale and esprit de corps which is now definitely lacking in beach party organizations. When an operation was in prospect, beach party units could be designated for each beach from this organization. During an operation these beach parties would remain in control of the beaches until such time as the garrison forces took over, thereby eliminating the confusion and inefficiency now existing at that period resulting from beach parties being withdrawn when their ships leave.

(32) Shore Parties

The preceding remarks apply equally to the need for well trained and experienced shore parties. The shore party problem is without question one of the most important and the toughest problems connected with amphibious operations. Its commander must be an extremely capable, forceful, and resourceful officer with great organizational ability.

Although the initial assault requirements must necessarily be on call from the separate divisions, it is believed desirable that the Corps shore party assume control from the outset in order to provide the necessary coordination of the supply problem. As at both SAIPAN and IWO JIMA, difficulties may be experienced on one group of beaches and the entire supply for all troops ashore routed over only one or two beaches.

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The Corps shore party should be a permanently and separately organized force not subject to the call of any division commander for combat purposes. During this operation the division shore parties were made up largely of replacement troops for the division. This worked fine for a short period but these replacements were soon called up by their division commander, and ultimately resulted in undesirable delays in beach and dump unloading.

(33) Mortar Gunboats

The successful use of mortar gunboats throughout the early days of the assault was one of the outstanding features of this operation. The standard procedures developed during the training period proved adequate and the fire from these vessels was quite accurate and extremely effective.

(d) CONCLUSION

(34) This operation was an extremely difficult one, not only for the troops ashore, but for the ships afloat, and particularly for the small craft and personnel engaged in the ship-to-shore movement. Many new problems were encountered, and many lessons learned. In spite of these, however, the work went ahead and the job was accomplished in splendid fashion. It is with great pride that I pay tribute, not only to the FIFTH Amphibious Corps for its heroic assault and capture of IWO JIMA, but to the other officers and men of this task force who, although many of them were engaged in their first operation, accomplished their tasks with determination, resourcefulness and disregard of personal danger that was an inspiration to behold.

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Action Report
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COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO
(CTF 53 and CTG 51.21)

REPORT OF IWO JIMA OPERATION

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NAN	(IX)-7,8
Operating rooms, in LST(H)'s, installation of additional	(VI)-4
Organization, Administrative, for small craft	(III)-21
Padeyes on LCT's for securing to LST's	(XI)-2
Radio Equipment, allowance for AGC	(IX)-7
RCM	(IX)-8
Repair parties in LSD's	(XI)-3
Repair, small craft, LCM for	(XI)-3
Repairs, voyage, small craft	(III)-21
Rocket, 5#0 Spin Stabalized, use of	(IV)-7
Rockets, 4#5, employment of	(IV)-5
Salvage organization, beach	(X)-6
SCR Radar deck loaded on LST	(IX)-8
Surf and Breaker conditions, qualified aerographers mate with BM to make reports on	(VII)-2
Swell in deep water, means of measurement of	(VII)-2
Talkers, Indian	(IX)-7
"Task Force Communication Digest", distribution of	(IX)-6
Visual communications	(IX)-8
VHF multi-channel push button radio equipment, installation of	(IX)-7
VHF radio teletype equipment, furnish to TransRon and TransDiv Commanders	(IX)-7
VHF RATT frequency, not interfere with SK radar	(IX)-6
Voice radio calls for small craft	(IX)-7
Weather reporting code, simplified	(VII)-2

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA

PART (I)

LIST OF DIRECTIVES

1. Operation Plan Cincpoa No. 11-44, serial 0001027, dated 25 November 1944.
2. ComFIFTHFleet (CTF 50) - Operation Plan ComFIFTHFleet No. 13-44, serial 00040, dated 31 December 1944.
3. ComPhibsPac (CTF 51) - Operation Plan ComPhibsPac No. A25-44, serial 000280, dated 20 December 1944.
4. ComPhibsPac (CTF 51) - Training Order ComPhibsPac No. A29-44, serial 000287, dated 21 December 1944.
5. ComPhibsPac (CTF 51) - Training Movement Order ComPhibsPac No. A30-44, serial 000288, dated 21 December 1944.
6. ComPhibsPac (CTF 51) - Training Order ComPhibsPac No. A33-44, serial 000311, dated 31 December 1944.
7. ComPhibsPac (CTF 51) - Letter of Instructions for SOPA, IWO JIMA, after Departure of CTF 51 Estimated about 7 March 1945, serial 000149, dated 4 March 1945.
8. ComPhibGrp 2 (CTG 51.21) - Operation Order ComPhibGrp 2 No. A202-45, serial 00030, dated 8 March 1945.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA

PART (II)

COMPOSITION OF FORCES

SECTION (A)

COMPOSITION OF TRANSPORT GROUP ABLE (TG 51.12)

51.12 Transport Group ABLE (TransRon 16) - Rear Admiral HILL

AUBURN (F) - Captain MYERS 1 AGC

51.12.1 TransDiv 46 - Commodore McGOVERN

CECIL (SF), DEUEL, DARKE, HOCKING 4 APA
TOLLAND, ATHENE 2 AKA

51.12.2 TransDiv 47 - Captain WOTHERSPOON

RUTLAND (F), HIGHLANDS, SANDOVAL, HANSFORD 4 APA
WHITLEY 1 AKA

51.12.3 TransDiv 48 - Captain ANDREWS

TALLADEGA (F), MISSOULA, LUBBOCK, DICKENS 4 APA
STOKES 1 AKA
GUNSTON HALL 1 LSD

51.12.4 Temp. TransDiv 27 -

LENAWEE (F), WHITESIDE, CARTERET 3 APA
THURSTON 1 AP
YANCEY 1 AKA
GEAR 1 ARS

Screen - Captain CHANDLER

VAN VALKENBURG (CDS 58) (SF), FULLAM (CDS 45), GUEST
BENNETT (FD), HUDSON (FD), IRWIN, PRINGLE (CDD 90),
STANLY, HOWORTH, MULLANY, BRADFORD, TERRY, ANTHONY 13 DD
RIDDLE 1 DE
DEVASTATOR, DEFENSE 2 AM

NOTES:

1. On 29 January (W. Long.) BRULE due engineering casualty returned Pearl screened by GAMBLE. BRULE replaced by CARTERET who joined at SAIPAN, GAMBLE did not rejoin.

2. TERRY joined screen 29 January (W. Long.) and was detached at SAIPAN.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (II) - Composition of Forces;
Section (A) - Composition of Transport Group
Able (TG 51.12))

3. Following ships were detached at SAIPAN: MULLANY, BRADFORD,
ANTHONY, DEVASTATOR, DEFENSE.

4. Following ships joined at SAIPAN: HOWORTH, IRWIN, STANLY,
PRINGLE, RIDDLE, GUNSTON HALL, GEAR.

5. HALFORD scheduled join at SAIPAN, but due collision did
not participate.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (II) - Composition of Forces)

SECTION (B)

COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE FIFTY THREE

53 Attack Force - Rear Admiral HILL

Force Flagship - AUBURN - Captain MYERS

1 AGC

53.10 Air Support Control Unit - Commander Osborne

56.2 Assault Troops - Maj.Gen. H. SCHMIDT, USMC

Corps Troops, FIFTH Amphibious Corps, plus attached units
FOURTH Marine Division, plus attached units
FIFTH Marine Division, plus attached units

53.1 Transport Group ABLE - (TransRon 16) - Commodore McGOVERN

53.1.1 TransDiv 46 less SUFFOLK, plus TOLLAND - Commodore
McGOVERN

CECIL (SF), DEUEL, DARKE, HOCKING, THURSTON 5 APA
TOLLAND, WHITESIDE 2 AKA

53.1.2 TransDiv 47 - less MARATHON, KENTON, OBERON, plus
RUTLAND, HANSFORD, YANCEY -
Captain Wotherspoon

RUTLAND (F), HIGHLANDS, SANDOVAL
HANSFORD, CARTERET 5 APA
WHITLEY, YANCEY 2 AKA

53.1.3 TransDiv 48 - less LAGRANGE, TAZEWELL, KITTSO, plus
BURLESON, WYANDOT, TORRANCE, plus
TALLADEGA, MISSOULA, LUBBOCK,
LENAWEE, STOKES, GUNSTON HALL

TALLADEGA (F), MISSOULA, LUBBOCK, DICKENS,
LENAWEE 5 APA
ATHENE, STOKES 2 AKA
GUNSTON HALL 1 LSD

56.2.1 ABLE Landing Group - Maj.Gen. Rockey, USMC

FIFTH Marine Division, plus attached units
Corps and Garrison Force Troops, assigned
for transportation

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ComFibGrp 2 - TWO JEA (Part (II) - Composition of Forces)
Section (B) - Composition of Task Force
Fifty Three)

53.2 Transport Group BAKER - (TransRon 15) - Commodore FLANAGAN

53.2.1 TransDiv 43 less FREMONT, WARWICK, plus BAYFIELD,
ARTEMIS, OZARK - Commodore FLANAGAN

BAYFIELD (SF), MELLETTE, HENDRY, SIBLEY,	
BERRIEN	5 APA
SHOSHONE, ARTEMIS	2 AKA
OZARK	1 LSV

53.2.2 TransDiv 44 plus BELLE GROVE - Captain SEYFRIED

HINSDALE (F), PICKENS, SANBORN, NAPA, BLADEN	5 APA
SOUTHAMPTON, STARR	2 AKA
BELLE GROVE	1 LSD

53.2.3 TransDiv 45 less PONDERA, BRAKEN, STOKES, plus
LOWNDES BARROW, LEO, ASHLAND -
Captain SABALOT

LOCAN (F), NEWBERRY, MIFFLIN, LOWNDES, BARROW	5 APA
LEO, MULIPHEN	2 AKA
ASHLAND	1 LSD

56.2.2 BAKER Landing Group - Maj.Gen. CATES, USMC

FOURTH Marine Division, plus attached Units
Corps and Garrison Force Troops, assigned
for transportation

53.3 Tractor Flotilla - Captain BRERETON

Flotilla Flagships - GREGORY (FD), LCI(L) 994 (OF) 1 DD, 1 LCI(L)

53.3.1 Tractor Group ABLE - Commander NEIKUM

Group Flagships - LITTLE, LCI(L) 995 (OF) 1 DD, 1 LCI(L)

53.3.2 LST Unit ONE - Commander GULLETT

LST 241, 354, 588, 643, 715, 756(GF), 929(H)	7 LST
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53.3.3 LST Unit TWO - Lieut.Comdr. LEA

LST 70, 390, 449(UF), 481, 634, 758, 1033(H)	7 LST
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Section (B) - Composition of Task Force
Fifty Three)

53.3.4 Tractor Group BAKER - Captain BRERETON

53.3.5 LST Unit THREE - Commander MACKINNON

LST 587(GF), 642(Radar), 716
723(Radar), 761, 812, 930(H) 7 LST

53.3.6 LST Unit FOUR - Commander LIEF

LST 684, 713(UF), 731, 787, 789,
928, 931(H) 7 LST

53.3.7 Tractor Group CHARLIE - Captain PETERSON, USCG

Group Flagships - ROOKS, LCI(L) 998(OF) 1 DD, 1 LCI(L)

53.3.8 LST Unit FIVE - Commander SANDS, USCG

LST 726, 760(GF), 763, 764, 779,
792(Radar), 784, 648, 1032 9 LST

53.3.9 LST Unit SIX - Commander MILLINGTON, USCG

LST 42, 121, 224, 399, 782(UF), 785,
795, 807, 940 9 LST

53.4 LSM Flotilla - Commander CARPENTER

Flotilla Flagship - LCI(L) 628 1 LCI(L)

53.4.1 LSM Unit ABLE - Lieut. Comdr. GRISWOLD

LSM 43, 44, 46, 47, 140, 141, 49, 92, 242,
261, 264(GF), 266 12 LSM

53.4.2 LSM Unit BAKER - Lieut. Comdr. LIND

LSM 48, 59, 60(GF), 145, 201, 202, 206, 207, 238,
239, 241, 260, 70, 74, 126, 211, 323, 216 18 LSM

53.5 Control Group - Captain Adell

53.5.1 Central Control Unit - Captain Adell

PCE 877 1 PCE
PC(S) 1403 1421 2 PC(S)

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53.5.2 Control Unit ABLE - Lieut. Comdr. DAWES

PC(S) 1460, 1461
SC 1298, 1314

2 PC(S)
2 SC

53.5.3 Control GREEN - Lieut. SEXTON

PC 463
SC 1315

1 PC
1 SC

53.5.4 Control RED - Lieut. BILLS

PC 469
SC 1316

1 PC
1 SC

53.5.5 Control Unit BAKER - Lieut. Comdr. WHEELER

PC(S) 1452, 1455
SC 1066, 1272, 1360

2 PC(S)
3 SC

53.5.6 Control YELLOW - Lieut. Comdr. HENDERSON

PC 578

1 PC

53.5.7 Control BLUE - Lieut. WHEATLEY

PC 1081
SC 1374

1 PC
1 SC

53.6 Beach Party Group - Captain ANDERSON

Group Flagship - SC 724

53.6.1 Beach Party Unit ABLE - Commander TRAPNELL

TransRon 16 Beach Party

53.6.3 GREEN Beach Party - Lieut. Comdr. McDEVITT

TransDiv 48 Beach Party

53.6.4 RED Beach Party - Lieut. Comdr. SQUIRES

TransDiv 47 Beach Party

53.6.2 Beach Party Unit BAKER - Lieut. Comdr. LIPPENCOTT

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (II) - Composition of Forces;
Section (B) - Composition of Task Force
Fifty Three)

TransRon 15 Beach Party

53.6.5 YELLOW Beach Party - Lieut.Comdr. LOOMIS

TransDiv 45 Beach Party

53.6.6 BLUE Beach Party - Lieut.Comdr. BIRD

TransDiv 44 Beach Party

53.7 Pontoon Barge, Causeway and LCT Group - Lieut.Comdr. Ryan

Group Flagship - LCI(L) 772

1 LCI(L)

53.7.1 Pontoon Barge Unit ABLE - Lieut. ELMIGER

16 - 3x12 barges (SP) when launched from
LST's 760, 779, 930, 931

53.7.2 Pontoon Barge Unit BAKER - Lieut.(jg) KNOLL

12 - 3x12 barges (SP) when launched from
LST's 784, 929, 1033

53.7.3 Causeway Unit ABLE - Lieut. LEWIS

3 causeway sets (each 2 - 2x30 causeways) when
launched from LST's 588, 758, 761

53.7.4 Causeway Unit BAKER - Lieut.(jg) JUDY

3 causeway sets (each 2 - 2x30 causeways) when
launched from LST's 763, 764, 787

53.7.5 LCT Unit - Lieut. CAPELESS

Group Flagship - LCI(L) 423

1 LCI(L)

53.7.6 LCT Unit ABLE - Lieut. CAPELESS

LCT 630 loaded on LST 715
LCT 631 loaded in GUNSTON HALL
LCT 632 loaded on LST 756
LCT 866 loaded on LST 713
LCT 1028 loaded on LST 684
LCT 1029 loaded in GUNSTON HALL

6 LCT

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (II) - Composition of Forces;
Section (B) - Composition of Task Force
Fifty Three)

53.7.7 LCT Unit BAKER - Ens. DORTON

LCT 1030 loaded on LST 782
LCT 1031 loaded on LST 1032
LCT 1404 loaded on LST 648
LCT 1055 loaded on LST 634
LCT 1269 loaded in GUNSTON HALL
LCT 1154 loaded on LST 716

6 LCT

53.8 Small Craft Group - Lieut. Comdr. NELSON

LCI(L) 1029(F) (Until arrival of LST(M)'s
LCI(G) 438, 441 (From TG 52.5)
LST(M) 676(F), 678 (on arrival of TG 51.5)

1 LCI(L)
2 LCI(G)
2 LST(M)

53.8.1 Small Boat Unit - Lieut. MANLEY

Small boats assigned

52.4 Underwater Demolition Group - Captain HANLON

GILMER (F), WATERS, BULL, BARR, BLESSMAN, BATES

6 APD

UDT #13, Lieut. Comdr. MORANZ embarked in BARR
UDT #12, Lieut. Comdr. HOCHULI embarked in BATES
UDT #14, Lieut. (jg) ONDERDONK embarked in BULL
UDT #15, Lieut. BROOKS embarked in BLESSMAN

52.5 Gunboat Support Group - Captain AYLWARD

Group Flagship - LCI(L) 988

1 LCI(L)

52.5.1 Gunboat Support Unit ONE - Comdr. MALANAPHY

LCI(L) 627 (F)
LCI(G) 450, 466, 469 (press),
471 (press), 473, 474

1 LCI(L)
6 LCI(G)

52.5.2 Gunboat Support Unit TWO - Lieut. Comdr. NASH

LCI(G) 346, 348, 438, 441, 449 (press)
457 (F)

6 LCI(G)

52.5.3 Gunboat Support Unit THREE - Capt. AYLWARD

LCS(L) 51, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36

6 LCS(L)

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (II)) -- Composition of Forces;
Section (B) - Composition of Task Force
Fifty Three)

52.5.4 Gunboat Support Unit FOUR - Lieut. Comdr. STONE

ICS(L) 31(F), 52, 53, 54, 55, 56

6 LCS(L)

51.1 Joint Expeditionary Reserve (when assigned) - Commodore LOOMIS

51.1.1 TransRon 11 - Commodore LOOMIS

51.1.2 TransDiv 31 less LEONARD WOOD, ARTEMIS, plus FREMONT,
WARRICK - Commodore LOOMIS

FREMONT (SF), FAYETTE, KNOX, LEEDSTOWN,
HARRY LEE
ALMAACK, WARRICK

5 APA
2 AKA

51.1.3 TransDiv 32 less PRESIDENT HAYES, ATHENE, plus CAPE
JOHNSON, JUPITER - Captain POPHAM

PRES. JACKSON (F), PRES. ADAMS, DOYEN, BOLIVAR
CAPE JOHNSON
LIBRA
JUPITER

4 APA
1 AP
1 AKA
1 AK

51.1.4 TransDiv 33 less WINDSOR, VIRGO, AURELIA, plus
ALHENA, HERCULES - Captain HAIGHT

CALLAWAY (F), FREDERICK FUNSTON, JAMES O'HARA,
FELAND
ALHENA
HERCULES

4 APA
1 AKA
1 AK

56.3 Landing Force Reserve - Maj. Gen. Erskine, USMC

THIRD Marine Division, plus attached units

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Action Report

ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA

PART (III)

OPERATIONS

SECTION (A)

LOADING

1. Assault forces of the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions plus Corps and Garrison Units were loaded in the HAWAIIAN Islands.
2. A survey of port facilities in MAUI and HAWAII was made early in December by representatives of interested commands and a twelve day loading schedule was decided on. This period of time proving to be ample.
3. Fifty-four hundred rounds of Naval 8" ammunition was distributed among nine ships and three hundred and sixty depth charges were loaded on two ships for resupply.
4. TransRon ELEVEN, one LSV, and three LSD were loaded in the MARIANAS. The LSV was loaded with fifty amphibious trailers, filled with rations, ammunition and water.
5. Sixty LST's and thirty-one LSM's were available for the operation. Of the IST's three were loaded in ULITHI, four in GUAM and the balance in the HAWAIIAN area. Six IST's carried causeway sets and fourteen LST's each carried four pontoon barges. Thirty-eight LST's were preloaded with troop supplies and twenty-four LST's preloaded with Navy ammunition.
6. Four IST's were designated as medical supply and evacuation control units, and three LST's as radar LST's.
7. Realizing that unloading at target from larger ships to small craft was likely to prove difficult and to reduce the unloading time of the transports it was decided to load pallets on one side of the tank deck of LST carrying LVT's. However, this decision was not reached until after loading had commenced on the larger ships and as a result "B" rations were the primary load of the pallets so loaded. During the unloading phase this proved to be the wrong type of supplies to be loaded in LST's as the beach could not handle them early in the operation. This caused the LST's to retract with cargo still aboard and it was not until four to six days later that they were able to beach and complete discharging.
8. Of the total LSM's available for loading, sixteen carried medium tanks, ten carried 4th and 5th Marine Divisions Shore Party equipment, one carried Signal equipment, one carried 75mm's of Special Weapons Co. and one carried Corps Engr. equipment, the latter being loaded in GUAM. Based on tests in OAHU prior to loading, a tonnage of 260 short tons was authorized, and to use this tonnage some LSM's stowed drums of gasoline in the stern, others understowed ammunition, rations or 5 gal.

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Section (A) - Loading

water cans. This type of cargo proved highly satisfactory during unloading and most LSM's unloaded completely once on the beach.

9. On arrival at SAIPAN many readjustments in the loadings had to be effected due to many LVT's being in SAIPAN. An officer of this staff flew to SAIPAN and arranged for all transfers, readjustments of loading and transfer of troops, and this operation was smoothly and efficiently accomplished.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (III) - Operations)

SECTION (B)

GENERAL NARRATIVE

1. The approach

(a) The Approach Plan became effective at 0910K February 18, and was executed without incident. No change in disposition of forces was involved. Pictures of the objective, taken on DOG minus THREE were delivered by plane drop about noon, and at 1500K the formation was stopped to permit transfer of Underwater Demolition Team personnel and charts to designated vessels.

2. The DOG Day assault

(a) All units arrived on schedule and it was apparent as early as 0700K that HOW Hour would be met. The only departure found necessary from prearranged plans was the deletion of LCI(G)'s from participation in assault as a result of heavy damage suffered on DOG minus TWO Day. The remaining 12 LCS(L)'s rearranged their formation so as to bring all beaches under fire. All preliminary landing preparations proceeded exactly as scheduled. The GUNSTON HALL, carrying LCT's with tanks embarked, completed launching of her 3 LCT's at 0740K. By 0810K all LST's carrying assault troops had been launched.

(b) All air support units arrived on stations promptly. At 0805K naval gunfire was lifted to permit bombing, rocket, and Napalm attacks on landing beaches and beach flanks, and resumed again at 0825K.

(c) No gunfire was received in or near transport or LST areas during this period, and transport squadrons were directed to move in 3000 yards at their discretion.

(d) Assault waves were dispatched on schedule, and landed on all beaches at 0900K, the prearranged HOW Hour. Only a small amount of gunfire was received in the boat lanes during the approach to the beaches.

(e) The evacuation control LST's launched one pontoon barge each during the morning. These were the only barges launched until DOG plus TWO Day. LST's carrying LCT's had previously been ordered to prepare to launch LCT's as soon as LVT's were discharged, and to report readiness. Six of these completed launching prior to sunset, making a total of nine LCT's in the water DOG night.

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Section (B) - General Narrative)

(f) LCT's and LSM's carrying tanks were called in to the beach commencing about 0920K, and all beached and discharged successfully in spite of enemy gunfire. The tanks, however, encountered great difficulty in moving inland from the beaches. Four LSM's were hit by shellfire while beached, but were able to retract under their own power.

(g) TransDiv 32 with one RCT of the THIRD Marine Division embarked, arrived in the area at 1000K. Reembarkation of LVT's in parent LST's commenced at about the same time. Reembarkation continued until early afternoon, at which time all were aboard with the exception of those being used for emergency supply. Loose sand on beaches and heavy enemy fire combined to make unloading of equipment very difficult. Only emergency supplies were landed on DOG Day. Transports moved in to Area ZEBRA in early afternoon.

(h) During the first day all BLT's of the FOURTH and FIFTH Marine Divisions, together with half of the division artillery, were landed against increasingly heavy opposition. Initial losses in amphibious vehicles were moderate. No air attacks took place, although unidentified planes caused an alert in the early evening.

(i) Night retirement was conducted in general accordance with previous plans and directives. A total of eleven fire support ships, seven transport types, and twenty-one LST's remained at the objective overnight. All LSM's and control craft remained at the objective overnight throughout the operation. No unloading took place during the night, except into LSM's alongside heavy ships remaining at the objective.

3. Subsequent operations

(a) February 20 (DOG plus ONE). Beach operations during the day were greatly hindered by soft sand and heavy enemy fire, further complicated by broached boats. Only DUKW's and LVT's were capable of moving supplies inland and only emergency supplies were landed. UDT personnel were used in an attempt to clear beaches. One LST beached on Beach RED during the afternoon to debark Corps artillery. Three additional LCT's were launched.

(b) Defense Group, consisting primarily of LST's, arrived during the forenoon, as did the SAMARITAN. Commenced evacuation of casualties to SAMARITAN on arrival. Defense Group, less repair ships and certain LST's required by troops, was ordered to retired area to await call.

(c) Night retirement was conducted generally as scheduled, with a total of fourteen fire support ships, twelve transport types, and

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Section (B) - General Narrative)

fifty LST's remaining at the objective. The large number of LST's was retained to permit unloading of "hot" supplies embarked therein by DUKW's and LVT's.

(d) Troop operations during the day proceeded slowly against heavy resistance. Prior nightfall all units of division artillery, plus one battalion of Corps artillery, were ashore. RCT 21, in TransDiv 32, was boated but not landed during the day. No air attack developed, although unidentified aircraft again caused a temporary RED Alert in the early evening. Some enemy gunfire fell in the transport area during the day, but no hits were received.

(e) February 21 (DOG plus TWO). LOGAN and NAPA were in collision during night retirement. Damage to LOGAN was light, but NAPA suffered extensive damage aft. Both able to proceed under own power.

(f) During the day fire continued heavy on all beaches. Pontoon causeway was launched during the day for use on Beach RED but could not be installed satisfactorily because of surf conditions, which also prevented the unloading of LCVP and LCM's. Pontoon barges were ordered launched and a total of seventeen were placed in the water during the day. This proved to be an unfortunate decision, as weather conditions prevented their use and made them unmanageable. Twelve LCS(L)'s were used during the day in an effort to clear beached landing craft from the beaches, but these attempts were only partially successful. Beached two LST's and numerous LSM's for unloading during the day.

(g) The SAMARITAN completed loading casualties and sailed during the afternoon. Twelve fire support ships, sixteen transport types, and all except six LST's remained at the objective overnight and continued unloading operations.

(h) Troops advanced very slowly against bitter opposition throughout the day. RCT 21, which had been embarked in TransDiv 32, was landed during the afternoon. RCT 9, embarked in TransDiv 31, was in the area as floating reserve. Commanding General FIFTH Marine Division and ADC FOURTH Marine Division set up ashore. A suicide air attack in force developed during the late afternoon in which several ships, among them the KEOKUK and LST 477, were hit by suicide planes. Both of the latter were operating in a retired area. They were able to proceed to IWO under their own power. No ships at the objective were damaged although several planes were shot down in the vicinity.

(i) February 22 (DOG plus THREE). Unfavorable weather conditions for small craft, particularly LVT's, DUKW's, and pontoon barges,

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Section (B) - General Narrative)

caused wide dispersion of these types and kept spare control vessels, gunboats and salvage vessels occupied in locating and rescuing drifters. Line of Departure was moved in to 1500 yards from the beach during the morning. An inspection of western beaches was made by the Force Beachmaster, who reported heavy sniper fire encountered. LCT's and LSM's were used to good advantage in unloading on the beaches, which were still badly blocked by beached boats and wrecked vehicles. Corps Shore Party was set up ashore. Access from beaches inland was being improved rapidly.

(j) A total of thirteen fire support ships, twenty transport types, and all LST's not completely unloaded remained at the objective overnight. Ships of TransDiv 32 were retained to unload 81mm ammunition badly needed ashore.

(k) Troops progressed very slowly during the day against heavy opposition. Air attacks by single Jap planes caused short alerts in the early morning and again in mid-afternoon. No damage resulted.

(l) February 23 (DOG plus FOUR). Transport Squadron Commanders were authorized to move heavy ships to anchorages off assigned beaches at daylight. Evacuation control LST's and LST(M)'s had been previously directed to inshore anchorage. Unloading conditions were much improved with beaches able to take all craft of LCM size and larger. General unloading was commenced on Beaches GREEN and RED. Permission was received to launch six additional LCT's, but only one was launched during the day.

(m) SOLACE arrived in the morning and commenced receiving casualties. CTG 51.1 reported for duty to CTF 53 with remainder of his task group. The remainder of the Defense Group also arrived and reported for duty. Twelve fire support ships, twenty transport types, and all LST's not completely unloaded remained in the area overnight.

(n) Troops made good advances during the day against continuing heavy opposition. Swimmers landed behind the lines on the west coast during the previous night and required extensive mop-up. Elements of the 28th RCT raised the colors on the peak of Mount SURIBACHI at 1035K, providing what may well be one of the most dramatic pictures of the war. Commanding General FOURTH Marine Division set up ashore. A temporary "FLASH RED" was sounded in the afternoon but the contact proved to be a friendly B-24. Commencing at 1900K, a series of attacks by enemy planes continuing for two hours was received. During the alert one LSM beached on Beach RED, received a hit forward from a 75mm gun and

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another on the same beach received shrapnel damage. BERRIEN received 40mm hit which wounded 17. No other damage resulted.

(o) February 24 (DOG plus FIVE). Unloading conditions on all beaches were improving steadily despite surf conditions which made handling of LCM's difficult. Ten LST's were assigned to assist in unloading heavy ships.

(p) The PINKNEY arrived to evacuate casualties. The SOLACE completed loading and sailed, as did eighteen LST's. Twelve fire support ships, twenty-four transport types, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight.

(q) Troop progress ashore was very slow against characteristic bitter resistance, despite an intense preliminary preparation by air, gunfire, and artillery. The Commanding General Landing Force established headquarters ashore. A special beach, consisting of a portion of beaches already in operation, was organized for use by the THIRD Marine Division, and the control organization was modified accordingly. RCT 9, embarked in TransDiv 31, was landed. The Commanding General THIRD Marine Division set up headquarters ashore, and the THIRD Marine Division took over the center of the lines. An enemy air attack took place during the evening with AUBURN receiving a bomb straddle by small bombs without injury.

(r) February 25 (DOG plus SIX). Unloading continued despite easterly winds and unfavorable unloading conditions. Commenced offshore survey operations off Beaches PURPLE and BROWN TWO on west coast. Established floating stowage for excess smoke munitions in LST 646.

(s) COLUMBIA VICTORY, troop ammunition resupply ship, arrived in the afternoon. Nine unloaded transports departed. A total of ten fire support ships, twenty-eight transport types, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight.

(t) Troops made little or no progress against what appeared to be the main enemy defensive installations. Anti-aircraft artillery landed during day. There were no enemy air attacks during the period.

(u) February 26 (DOG plus SEVEN). Beach conditions continued to improve as additional Shore Party personnel and equipment became available. General unloading was commenced on Beaches YELLOW and BLUE in the morning, and the restriction previously placed on use of LCVP's was cancelled. The temporary Fleet Post Office was

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established in LST 809, later shifted to LST 642. Senior LSM and LCT Commanders with staffs, set up headquarters in AUBURN.

(v) PINKNEY completed loading and departed during the afternoon. Seven LST's also departed. A total of twelve fire support ships, twenty-four transport types, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight.

(w) Troops progressed slowly against the main enemy defensive installations. OY aircraft commenced using airfield number one. Unloading of troop resupply ammunition commenced.

(x) February 27 (DOG plus EIGHT). Heavy breakers on east beaches prevented use of LCM's and LCVP's and made operations of LCT's difficult. First detachment of PBM search squadron arrived to be based at the newly established seaplane base. Senior LST Commander, with staff, set up headquarters in AUBURN. Fourteen unloaded transports departed during the afternoon. Eleven fire support ships, thirty-two transport types, and all LST's remained at objective overnight. Troops made good progress during the day against the main enemy defensive positions.

(y) February 28 (DOG plus NINE). Surf conditions remained unfavorable on eastern beaches, preventing unloading of LCM's and LCVP's. GroPac 11 assumed control of Beach GREEN during the morning. Operation of evacuation control LST's was terminated and all further evacuation was handled direct to transports. Inspection of western beaches showed them usable as soon as snipers were cleared. Underwater Demolition Team personnel and ships were released from further duty. Number one airfield was reported ready for emergency landings by carrier types.

(z) SAMARITAN and SOLACE arrived to receive casualties. Nine empty transports and six LST's departed during the afternoon. A total of ten fire support ships, twenty-one transport types, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight.

(aa) Troop progress ashore was good against heavy opposition. Island Commander set up his command post ashore during the day. Air delivery of critical items was inaugurated.

(bb) March 1 (DOG plus TEN). Two additional beaches were taken over by GroPac 11. Surf conditions still prohibited landing of LCM's on eastern beaches.

(cc) SAMARITAN completed loading and sailed. Four unloaded transports also departed. Ten fire support ships, nineteen transport types, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight.

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(dd) Troop progress during the day was slow. Enemy planes appeared in the area in the early morning, but caused no damage. Enemy shore battery in northern portion of island opened up at daylight on the TERRY, and scored numerous hits. COLHOUN received one shell hit and STEMBEL was straddled. COLUMBIA VICTORY, with a load of ammunition, received several near misses.

(ee) March 2 (DOG plus ELEVEN). Opened beach on west coast to use by LCT's and DUKW's. LCT 1029 broached on RED Beach. ZERO Garrison Echelon arrived for unloading. HERCULES grounded in the early afternoon, but was cleared by tugs without apparent damage. SOLACE completed loading and sailed as did four unloaded transports. All but seven of remaining transports, all LST's and ten fire support ships remained at the objective overnight. First emergency landing was made on the airfield during the morning. Troop progress was good against continuing opposition.

(ff) March 3 (DOG plus TWELVE). Commenced using western beaches for all LCT unloading. Shifted ships working cargo to western anchorages to take advantage of lee. Screen was modified to provide adequate cover. BOLIVAR and CALLOWAY while at anchor off eastern beaches received small caliber shell hits with only minor damages resulting. Nine fire support ships, and all LST's remained at the objective overnight. Five LST's sailed. Troops made satisfactory progress but opposition was still determined.

(gg) March 4 (DOG plus THIRTEEN). Used both anchorage areas for heavy ships; western for unloading ships and eastern for ships not so engaged. A B-29 made a successful emergency landing on airfield number one. LSM 59 reported that she was completely disabled by flooding received while beached. CTF 51 ordered first garrison echelon brought forward.

(hh) SUMNER arrived and reported to ComSeron 12 representative for hydrographic work. DesDiv 99 arrived. Transferred pontoon barge and causeway personnel to BERRIEN, who departed with MULIPHEN in the afternoon. Eight fire support ships, all LST's, and thirty-one transport types remained at the objective overnight. Troops progress slight against fierce opposition.

(ii) March 5 (DOG plus FOURTEEN). Surf conditions on western beaches made unloading by LCM and LCT difficult. JOLIET VICTORY, ammunition resupply ship, arrived. Six transports, with RCT 3 embarked, departed for GUAM. Eight fire support ships, and all transport and LST's, remained at the objective overnight. Troops utilized the day in reorganizing and readjusting front lines.

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(jj) March 6 (DOG plus FIFTEEN). Unloading conducted on both eastern and western beaches with surf interfering on western side. Conducted survey of IST approaches to western beaches. Access for IST discovered off Beach WHITE TWO. Eleven transport types departed. These ships were the last remaining of those bringing in the three assault divisions, except for five ships designated for reembarkation of troops. COLUMBIA VICTORY sailed. Nine fire support ships, all IST's, and all transport types, remained at the objective overnight.

(kk) Troops were able to make only very slight gains despite very heavy preparation fires. Twenty-eight P-51's and twelve P-61's arrived. DOYEN, in eastern anchorage, was straddled by fire from shore with no damage.

(ll) March 7 (DOG plus SIXTEEN). Unloading conditions on western beaches became increasingly worse because of heavy surf and operations were suspended after sunset. Unloading continued on east beaches. IST 761 beached successfully on western beach during morning, using previously marked channel. CAPE STEPHENS reported serious propeller damage, which prevented her proposed participation in forthcoming operations. LCT 1029 was hauled clear of the eastern beaches, but could not be salvaged because of unexpected flooding. She was towed to deep water and sunk. GroPac II Port Director set up headquarters in AUBURN preparatory to assuming control of unloading. Garrison Group ONE arrived. SAMARITAN arrived. No night retirements were made on this and succeeding days. Eight fire support ships were available inside screen.

(mm) Troops made better progress against apparently decreasing opposition. Early morning RED Alert was caused by an unidentified contact which was soon lost. Three DUMBO PB5YA's arrived to base ashore. Shore based aircraft assumed duties as day and night CAP.

(nn) March 8 (DOG plus SEVENTEEN). Surf conditions remained bad on western beaches and all ships involved in loading or unloading operations were shifted to eastern anchorages. Crew of crashed B-29 rescued by HUDSON and crew of crashed VT picked up by screen vessel. SUMNER received minor caliber shell hit with one killed. SAMARITAN completed loading and departed. SOLACE arrived. HAMLIN departed after securing seaplane base. Facilities previously provided by base transferred ashore. Three transport types not immediately required were sent to a waiting area about 100 miles southeast of the objective. Nine fire support ships were available during the day and night. Troops progressed slowly during the day against many pillboxes.

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(oo) March 9 (DOG plus EIGHTEEN). Continued unloading over eastern beaches with surf preventing operations on western side. CTF 51 departed and CTF 53 assumed duties of SOPA IWO JIMA with designation CTG 51.21. Commander Expeditionary Troops transferred his headquarters to AUBURN. Three transport types of the ZERO Garrison Group completed unloading and departed. Two task groups of eleven transport types each, with escorts, were directed to operate at sea in a retired area until called forward. These were the ships designated for reembarkation of the FOURTH and FIFTH Marine Divisions. VTB made successful wheels up landing on airfield after dark. Six fire support ships were available during the day and night.

(pp) Troop progress was encouraging against decreasing resistance. Patrols reached the water at the northern end of the Island during the afternoon. An early morning air attack by several enemy planes resulted in no damages to own shipping or shore installations. Night fighter from shore made contact and forced his target to jettison bombs.

(qq) March 10 (DOG plus NINETEEN). Continued unloading on eastern beaches only. Several B-29's made emergency landings. Two unloaded ships of the ZERO Garrison Group sailed, completing the departure of that group except for one ship remaining to evacuate troops. SOLACE departed. Disabled LSM 59 departed under tow. GREGORY reported destroying two mines bearing 025 degrees, distance 50 miles from SURIBACHI. Six fire support ships were available day and night. Shore based aircraft assumed anti-submarine patrol duties. Troops progress was good with troops at waters edge in several places. Heaviest resistance was centered along the left side of the line.

(rr) March 11 (DOG plus TWENTY). CTG 51.21 turned over to the Port Director the responsibility for unloading garrison shipping. Fourteen LSM's and sixteen LCT's were assigned him for this function, the remainder, plus LST's, being reserved for troops reembarkation. DICKERSON (APD) departed for GUAM with fifty-eight POW's embarked. Remainder of the escort carrier group ceased providing support missions and departed. Six fire support ships were available for day and night support. Organized resistance, except for numerous pockets, ceased in the THIRD and FOURTH MarDiv sector, but strong opposition was still encountered by the FIFTH MarDiv.

(ss) March 12 (DOG plus TWENTY-ONE). Continued unloading on eastern beaches. Established boat pool in LST(M) 676 under command of GroPac 11. Commenced netlaying operations off east coast. BOUNTIFUL arrived. Seven B-29's landed. Anti-submarine plane

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made visual submarine contact to southeast and DEEDE (DE) was sent to conduct Hunter-Killer operations. Results were negative, although search was continued until sunset of the next day. Two heavy cruisers departed, leaving only destroyers for fire support requirements. One or two destroyers, plus an LCI on occasion, were available for fire support duty, primarily illumination, throughout the remainder of the operations. Troops conducted mopping up operations in THIRD and FOURTH MarDiv area. FIFTH Division continued to meet bitter opposition in its Zone of Action.

(tt) March 13 (DOG plus TWENTY-TWO). Returning B-29's, several of which landed at IWO, caused a BLUE Alert in the early morning. The second Garrison Group arrived, including a troop ammunition resupply ship. Three LST's, two with troop ammunition loads, arrived. Two maintenance and resupply ships were released and sailed. KAMA and KANGOKU ROCKS, off west coast of island, were secured by troops without opposition. CHINA VICTORY reported cracked rudder post, but investigation proved that defect was not serious. FIFTH MarDiv was still meeting heavy opposition in its sector.

(uu) March 14 (DOG plus TWENTY-THREE). Surf conditions made unloading on eastern beaches difficult and swell interfered with loading alongside. Eleven transport and cargo types arrived from retired area and commenced reembarkation of the FOURTH Marine Division under the direction of their own task unit commander. Ships were initially anchored off eastern beaches but were moved to western anchorages later in the day. Troops and equipment continued to reembark into landing craft from eastern beaches for discharge into ships off western beaches. BOUNTIFUL completed loading casualties and departed. Four LST's, two carrying crippled LVT's and two ammunition, departed. Ten B-29's landed. Special anti-submarine search to southeast was established in view of the possibility of an enemy sub in that area.

(vv) At 0930K the American Flag was officially raised over IWO JIMA.

(ww) FIFTH Marine Division made good progress against very heavy opposition. THIRD Division and part of FOURTH Division not yet embarked continued mopping up operations. ComGen Expeditionary Troops departed.

(xx) March 15 (DOG plus TWENTY-FOUR). Reembarkation of FOURTH Marine Division and unloading of garrison proceeded from eastern beaches. LSM fouled in the net off the eastern coast during the early morning, and was not freed until the next day. Two transports of the second Garrison Group, one carrying POW's, departed.

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(yy) March 16 (DOG plus TWENTY-FIVE). Submarine contact was made by anti-submarine plane thirty miles northeast and ELDEN was sent to assist. Results were negative.

(zz) IWO JIMA was reported officially secured at 1800K. FOURTH Marine Division continued reembarkation and all other units continued wiping out pockets of resistance.

(aaa) March 17 (DOG plus TWENTY-SIX). Surf conditions on eastern beaches became worse during the day, but not sufficiently so to stop reembarkation. Numerous contacts were made by anti-submarine planes during the day, but all proved negative. Destroyer of outer screen made contact evaluated as positive submarine by her, but was unable to develop it. DE and plane sent to assist also failed. A total of sixteen B-29's landed. Commander Minesweeping Unit completed sweeping previously unswept area to westward of island, with negative results. Fighter pilot on CAP reported missing. Resultant search had negative results. Tanker moorings for gasoline pipe line were found to be out of position, and relocation was commenced. OCEANUS (ARB) departed. Troops continued mopping up operations.

(bbb) March 18 (DOG plus TWENTY-SEVEN). Surf conditions on western beaches became worse during the day. Three LST's and one LSM beached there during the afternoon, and all retracted successfully although LST's encountered difficulty in high wind and swell. Operations on western beaches were secured at sunset and all ships were directed to be prepared to shift to eastern anchorages at sunrise. Ships conducting loading or unloading operations had previously been so directed. Twelve transport or cargo type assigned to reembark the FIFTH MarDiv arrived and began reembarkation, initially from western beaches. COSSATOP (AO) arrived to act as station oiler. Four ships of the first and second Garrison Group departed. LST 642, without engine, drifted into the anti-submarine net, with no damage. An anti-submarine plane was forced down during the afternoon, and a search by DUMBO and three screening vessels had negative results. Units of FIFTH MarDiv commenced reembarkation, but clean-up of heavy pocket of resistance in northern corner of the island continued.

(ccc) March 19 (DOG plus TWENTY-EIGHT). Surf conditions on western beaches remained bad. All ships loading or unloading anchored off the east coast, and those which had completed loading shifted to west coast anchorage. Tug cleared LST 642 from anti-submarine net. A B-29 was ditched to northward, and a destroyer was sent out to conduct search in conjunction with a DUMBO plane. The search was initially negative. Further search

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for downed ASP plane was conducted, with negative results. Com DesRon 4 in DUNLAP, with two destroyers, arrived and reported to Screen Commander. Commanding General FOURTH Marine Division embarked in the PRESIDENT POLK. Clean-up of pockets of resistance continued ashore.

(ddd) March 20 (DOG plus TWENTY-NINE). Surf conditions on western beaches permitted unloading operations, while those on eastern beaches became worse as a result of a heavy swell. Operations continued temporarily from both beaches. An LCT, while at anchor, was rammed by an LST, and damaged so severely that emergency docking was required. Destroyer was recalled from search for B-29 and for ASP plane, but DUMBO plane sighted B-29 survivors in the afternoon and GATLING (DD) was dispatched and accomplished their rescue. Net laying operations off eastern beaches were suspended until the weather improved, since the heavy swell made operations hazardous. All ships reembarking the FOURTH Marine Division completed loading and departed. Four transport types arrived with the Army Garrison RCT embarked. A YOG with badly needed bulk aviation gasoline arrived and commenced pumping to shore stowage. The FIFTH Marine Division continued reembarkation of selected units. Clean-up operations were still in progress ashore.

(eee) March 21 (DOG plus THIRTY). Continued embarkation and unloading operations on both beaches and commenced debarking the garrison RCT on western beaches. Reembarkation of FIFTH MarDiv proceeded very slowly because of combat requirements.

(fff) March 22 (DOG plus THIRTY-ONE). Unloading conditions on western beaches were excellent. Eastern beaches were ordered closed during the morning because of heavy surf. LST 727 broached in the early morning when an LSM coming off the beach fouled her anchor. Two tugs and an LCI were sent to assist, but efforts to bring her off during the day were hampered by heavy surf and parting lines, and she was not gotten clear until March 25. An LSM broached later in the morning, but cleared without damage with the assistance of an LCI. Conducted a survey for additional beaches on western coast suitable for LSM's and above, but with negative results. RATHBURNE (APD) departed with POW's embarked.

(ggg) March 23 (DOG plus THIRTY-TWO). All unloading and embarkation continued over western beaches. ZUNI (ATF) fouled tow wire in propeller while engaged in salvage of LST 727 and broached on eastern beach south of the LST. Salvage operations on the latter temporarily suspended, and remaining tug and two net

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tenders sent to ZUNI's assistance. CTG 51.21 requested the services of a salvage officer and an additional tug from CTF 94. LST 642, which was disabled, reported she was dragging on to beach, and was taken in tow by LST 38 and shifted to western anchorage. Net unit commenced installation of net off west coast as a combined protective and net stowage measure until permanent installation off east coast could be completed. Heavy weather carried away several net moorings off eastern coast.

(hhh) March 24 (DOG plus THIRTY-THREE). Unloading conditions continued good on western beaches, and surf moderated on the eastern beaches. ZUNI was pulled clear of beach by tug and net tender. Damage was considerable but she expected to be able to proceed under her own power after emergency repairs. Resumed salvage work on LST 727, utilizing two net tenders to tow. Authorized re-opening of eastern beaches as surf continued to moderate. Dispensed with dawn and dusk general quarters at discretion of commanding officers. FIFTH Marine Division continued embarkation as rapidly as troops could be spared.

(iii) March 25 (DOG plus THIRTY-FOUR). Surf conditions on western beaches became unfavorable for LCT's and operation of these craft was suspended. Conditions on eastern beaches were good. LST 727 was pulled clear by two net tenders and anchored off shore. Numerous salvage and submersible pumps were necessary to control flooding. Six transport and cargo types carrying garrison personnel and equipment arrived, as did four LST's. CTG 51.21 was authorized to retain LST's in area after unloaded. An evening RED Alert was caused by five raids, totalling approximately ten planes. None of the planes closed below forty-five miles. Two sure and one possible kills were reported by night fighters, four of which were airborne. Troops completed wiping out all pockets of resistance.

(jjj) March 26 (DOG plus THIRTY-FIVE). At 0800K Commanding General Landing Force turned over command to the Island Commander. The capture and occupation phase of IWO JIMA was declared completed and CTG 51.21 reported to Commander Forward Area for temporary duty as SOPA IWO JIMA.

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SECTION (C)

UNLOADING OPERATIONS

1. Assault Unloading

Unloading of assault shipping on DOG Day and DOG plus ONE Day was confined to LST's and LSM's, except for a floating reserve of LCVF's and LCM's maintained at each control vessel, loaded with ammunition, water, rations and medical supplies. Surf conditions soon proved it useless to try landing supplies by small boats and by DOG plus ONE Afternoon all unloading of transports was confined to LCT's and LSM's. APA's and AKA's were restricted to unloading "On Call" from DOG plus ONE to DOG plus FIVE. When shipping availability permits, APA's should carry ammunition, emergency rations, water, medical supplies, and vehicles only. All organizational gear should be loaded on the AKA's. Ordinarily the beach is never ready to receive on DOG Day anything but this type of cargo. APA's loaded in this manner could completely unload immediately and retire from the area. As other types of supplies are needed and wanted on the beach the AKA's can supply it faster than the beach parties can handle.

The loading into LCT's and LSM's must be more carefully supervised by the Commanding Officers of Transports. Many Transports overloaded the smaller craft, or dumped the supplies into them giving no thought to the difficulties of unloading on the beach. In some cases large heavy boxes were loaded on top of an already overloaded LCT causing hours of delay on the beach in unloading.

The preloading of LST's again proved highly satisfactory, the only error being in loading of "B" rations. The preloaded supplies must be confined to supplies needed on the beach early in the operation.

LSM's should be preloaded with supplies in a like manner as LST's to take advantage of the tonnage they can carry.

The loading of Garrison Assault Units in Assault Troop shipping should be discontinued if practicable. Garrison Assault Units should be loaded in their own ships so they can be unloaded when needed without having to retain several partially loaded assault ships in the area.

2. Garrison Unloading

On 3 March the ZERO Echelon arrived. It arrived with fenders, lines and camels prepared on each vessel. Special slings, nets and stevedore gear had been prepared aboard each vessel to handle each type of cargo. They completed unloading on 11 March, and great credit belongs to the loading agencies and to the Convoy Commodore,

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Capt. MacGOWAN, for their readiness and smart performance.

The first echelon ships arrived at target with loading plans that proved useless, as these plans showed what had been loaded on them on the West Coast. Much of this cargo was unloaded in OAHU and the ships reloaded there for target. New loading plans had not been forwarded to the Island Commander nor delivered to the ships. One ship, BRITAIN VICTOR, had 8000 measurement tons of cargo, all slow moving, while a sister ship, CHINA VICTORY, had 5000 measurement tons of cargo, mostly vehicles. These ships were not equipped with boats, fenders, camels, or sufficient line, and had insufficient cargo nets. They were not prepared to mess unloading crews. They arrived in the area without a boat on any ship, making it impossible for the Commodore or Unloading Officer to visit and prepare his other ships for unloading until boats could be provided for him from an already overtaxed boat-pool. Forty-eight hours were lost getting these ships ready to discharge cargo.

Garrison Echelons coming into hostile areas prior to the securing of the areas, must be prepared to start unloading immediately on arrival. They must be equipped to take care of themselves. Messing of unloading crews must be arranged for prior to departure. Rear echelons should see that ships of this class are properly prepared and fitted out before they sail. This is especially true when they are part of the assault shipping.

Two resupply ammunition ships had to be called into the area early in the operation. The first ship, COLUMBIA VICTORY, arriving DOG plus SIX. The ammunition needed was primarily mortar and artillery. The 155mm ammunition was all stowed in one hatch and the 105mm stowed in two hatches, one of these being the same hatch as the 155mm. The ammunition needed primarily by the troops being 155mm and 105mm, it meant working only two hatches. This did not allow the ship to be worked at the required rate as if the different types of ammunition had been spread throughout the five hatches. The loading of the JOLIET VICTORY was the same as the COLUMBIA VICTORY, with all artillery ammunition in two hatches.

For future operations where the beaching of LST's is possible, it is recommended that LST's be loaded with about 1000 tons of high priority ammunition. Experience has taught that only three or four types of ammunition is required by the troops in addition to the initial supply. If the LST's are not capable of beaching or unloading at a causeway, larger ships must be loaded so that all priority types of ammunition are available from all hatches.

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** Unloading Functions turned over to GROFAC 11 on 14 March 1945.

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4. Logistics During Unloading Phase:

(a) Logistics during the unloading phase was supervised by CTF 51 from DOG Day (19 February, 1945), until the date of his departure on 9 March, 1945, when it was turned over to CTF 53.

(b) The logistic situation was as follows:

(1) The CACHE (AO-67) was the only Fleet Tanker present. Her cargo consisted of 58,000 barrels black fuel, 5,000 barrels diesel oil, 323,000 gallons Avgas, and the standard load of lube oil in drums.

(2) The NEMASKET (AOG-10) was present with 8,005 barrels diesel oil and 1185 gallons of 9370 lube oil.

(3) The WABASH (AOG-4) was also present with 14,150 barrels diesel oil and 444 barrels of 9370 bulk lube oil, plus 50 drums of 9250 and 114 drums of 9370 lube oil. This drummed lube oil was transferred to the LST 642 for later issue to small craft remaining at the objective.

(4) The TOMBIGBEE (AOG-11) was present with 114,700 gallons of fresh water on hand.

(5) The CALAMUS (AOG-25) was standing by at GUAM loaded with water awaiting orders to sail to IWO JIMA if needed. This AOG was released to ComServRon TEN on 21 March, 1945, since her services were not required.

(c) Due to adverse weather conditions during the unloading phase a critical shortage of mooring lines and fenders developed very rapidly. All transports leaving the objective were directed to transfer all available six and eight inch manila line and fenders to LST 646, which had previously been designated as a "smoke supply ship."

(d) The fueling of the screen vessels was supervised and handled by the Screen Commander and worked out very satisfactorily. All fueling of these vessels was carried out in the Inner Screen Area.

(e) The LST(M) 676 furnished supplies to an average of about five ships per day. This service included fuel, water, lube oil, fresh and dry provisions. The fresh and dry provisions stocks were augmented by the transfer of excess provisions from the transports arriving at IWO JIMA.

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(f) In order to maintain adequate water supply for small craft remaining in the area, ComServRon TEN was requested to fill all LST's sailed to IWO JIMA to their capacity with potable water.

(g) All aviation gasoline remaining in the COSSATOT (AO-77) (223,000 gallons) was transferred to the YOG-72 for delivery to the Island Commander.

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SECTION (D)

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Commencing prior to the initial rehearsal and continuing through the movement to the objective, the Tractor Flotilla Commander (ComLST Flot21) was responsible for coordinating movement, logistics, and repair of over one hundred and fifty miscellaneous craft ranging in size from SC's to LST's. This is a tremendous burden to place upon the organization of an LST Flotilla Staff. Although the assignment was well handled, it is believed that a more satisfactory solution can be reached.

Consideration should be given to assigning an Amphibious Group Commander to command of the Tractor Flotilla until sortie from final staging point, at which time he will be available for such other duty as desired. This will enable the multitude of details in organization, loading, maintenance, movement, and repair to be handled by a large staff with adequate facilities. This assignment could be combined with that of Commander of the Joint Expeditionary Force Reserve, or of the Demonstration Group, since the need for these commands commences when the need for a Tractor Flotilla Commander ends.

2. Small craft, such as SC's, PC's, and PCS's, required extensive voyage repairs after completion of the long movement from PEARL to SAIPAN. Repair facilities were incapable of fulfilling all requests prior departure.

Necessary availability for small craft should be scheduled after their arrival in forward staging areas. This may require earlier departure of these ships from rear areas, and make them unavailable for screening duties with Tractor Groups. This availability is particularly necessary for vessels stationed on the Line of Departure. It is further recommended that an administrative organization be established to handle the numerous requirements of this type of craft.

3. Night retirement of ships not required at the objective was pre-arranged. Routes were laid out and retiring groups and escorts were assigned insofar as practicable. This reduced to an appreciable extent the amount of traffic necessary in order to initiate retirement.

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PART (IV)

NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT

SECTION (A)

NARRATIVE OF FIRE SUPPORT BY LCI TYPES

1. 4"5 rocket fire for beach preparation and close support of the landing was scheduled for delivery by the Gunboat Support Group consisting of two 6-ship LCI(G) units and two 6-ship LCS(L) units. The plan provided for initial rocket salvos to be delivered by these ships during the period HOW minus NINETY to HOW minus FORTY-FIVE for the purpose of detonating possible beach inflammables well in advance of the time troops would land. The plan also provided for two full rocket salvos to be delivered in close support of the leading wave. The first of these was to be delivered on the beach at HOW minus TEN minutes after which launchers were to be reloaded and the second salvo fired 300 to 500 yards inland from the beach. Strafing by aircraft, scheduled to commence at HOW minus FIVE minutes, required the second 4"5 rocket salvo to be fired prior to this time.

2. To prevent early blanketing of supporting fire of two destroyers and a battleship stationed in the boat lanes, the plan prescribed that the four 6-ship gunboat units proceed toward shore in unit columns ahead of the leading LVT assault wave. After passing the battleship - destroyer line, the gunboat units were to deploy into line for firing rockets.

3. Of the original 12 LCI(G)'s of Gunboat Support Units #1 and #2, only three were in condition to deliver the scheduled support on DOG Day, the others having been lost or damaged by enemy fire on previous days. Units #3 and #4 consisting of 6 LCS(L)'s each were directed to increase their spacing on final deployment in order to cover the portions of the beach assigned by plan to the absent LCI(G)'s.

4. On completion of their rocket salvos at HOW minus FIVE minutes, 4 LCS(L)'s of each of the two gunboat support units took position according to plan, opposite the flanks of the landing area and supported, with 40mm fire, battalions to which initially assigned. This fire was directed on the slopes of SURIBACHI YAMA and the high flanking ground on the right of the beach. Until communications were established with assigned spotters ashore, fire was directed by replacement spotters previously embarked in one LCS(L) of each unit for this purpose.

5. Mortar Support Units #1, #2, and #5, consisting of six mortar LCI's, were assigned to provide scheduled flanking and deep supporting mortar fire as follows: Units #2 and #5, using Plan "A", fired from HOW minus THIRTY-FIVE to HOW minus SEVEN minutes on the eastern slopes

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and approaches to SURIBACHI YAMA while Unit #1, using the same fire delivery plan, delivered fire on the eastern flank high ground during the same period. At HOW Hour Units #2 and #5 in column, entered and crossed the boat lanes from the west, turned shoreward into line and followed the SIXTH assault wave toward shore. At about HOW plus TWENTY minutes, when 2000 yards from shore all ships of these two units opened fire using Plan "B" with mortar range set for 3200 yards and swept a rectangular area 2200 yards long by 1000 yards deep as they moved in. Stopping and lying to 1000 yards from shore, fire was then maintained 1800 yards inland and parallel to the beach until HOW plus SIXTY minutes. At HOW minus SEVEN, Mortar Support Unit #1 shifted its line of fire farther to the east for safety to troops and resumed fire at HOW plus TEN minutes firing at a reduced rate for neutralization until 1300. 17,400 rounds of 4.2 mortar were scheduled for delivery in support of the landing by these three units.

6. RCM and Rocket Support Unit #1 consisting of nine 5"0 SSR Rocket LCI's, delivered scheduled neutralization fire on the MOTOYAMA area from 0645 to 1300. All rockets on board these ships (a total of approximately 9500) were delivered during this period, using standard Plan "RA" from a reference point to northeast of the island. On completion of this fire, all fire support duties of this unit terminated for the remainder of the operation.

7. The 8 LCS(L)'s assigned to flank battalions continued their close fire support missions throughout the day, replacement 40mm ammunition being obtained for them from heavy cruisers. For night support, 4 LCS(L)'s of Unit #3 were assigned to support battalions designated by Division Headquarters.

8. On completion of their scheduled fire, Mortar Support Units #1, #2, and #5 replenished mortar ammunition and joined Units #3 and #4 in area ROGER awaiting assignment. Night harassing mortar fire requests from Headquarters Landing Force were fulfilled by assignment of Units #2 and #5 to cover prescribed areas throughout the night using standard plan "A" and varying the line of fire between specified limits. A total of 24,000 rounds of which 20% was WP, were delivered by these two units from reference points 1000 yards off the northwest and southeast coasts of the island. Large caliber enemy counter fire was received by the northern unit, but was not intense or accurate enough to require the withdrawal of this unit.

DOG plus ONE - 20 February 1945

9. At 0920, CTF 51 gave control of fire support by LCI types to CTF 53 for the remainder of the operation. At this time, four LCS(L)'s each of Gunboat Units #3 and #4 were assigned to furnish 40mm fire in

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direct support of battalions on the right and left flanks of our lines.

10. From 1242 to 1400 Mortar Support Unit #3 delivered 6000 rounds of mortar fire into the southeastern coastal areas of the island using standard plan "C". This special mission was delivered in an attempt to stop the heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire on the landing beaches believed to be emanating from the area taken under fire.

11. Night direct support requests for gunboats were fulfilled by assigning four LCS(L)'s of Unit #3 to battalions as requested.

12. Mortar Units #1 and #2, using Plan "A", provided harassing fire throughout the night into the same areas as were covered on DOG Night. 12,000 4.2 mortar shells were scheduled for delivery by these units during the night. Shortly after commencing its fire, Unit #1, positioned to the north, was driven off by heavy and accurate enemy artillery fire. The GUEST was then assigned to cover this unit with counter battery fire. On resumption of fire, Unit #1 was again forced to withdraw in spite of the GUEST's supporting fire.

DOG plus TWO - 21 February 1945

13. During the morning, one LCS(L) delivered 40mm fire in support of assigned battalion. All other LCS(L) were released from fire support status and assigned to provide urgent salvage work on the beaches.

14. From 1750 to 1800 Mortar Support Unit #3, using Plan "C" delivered 540 rounds of mortar fire into the southeastern coastal area for neutralization.

15. Mortar Units #1 and #5 delivered the night harassing fires requested by Headquarters Landing Force. The area covered was essentially the same as on previous nights. As before, the northern unit (Unit #5) received enemy counter fire during the night but counter battery fire by the HALL, assigned for support, permitted this unit to remain in position throughout the night.

DOG plus THREE - 23 February 1945

16. Gunboat Unit #3 was assigned permanently to salvage duties this date. Unit #4 was retained for fire support duties only. Four LCS(L)'s of Unit #4 were assigned to direct support missions with battalions in flank positions throughout the day and that night.

17. Mortar Unit #2, supported by SHANNON, delivered night harassing fire using Plan "A" from a reference point off the northeast coast of the island.

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PERIOD after DOG plus THREE

18. LCS(L)'s of Unit #4 and LCI(G)'s available from RCM Unit #2 were assigned daily to support battalions designated by Headquarters Landing Force. Division intelligence officers, specially trained observers, and naval gunfire liaison officers were frequently embarked in ships for reconnaissance and specific fire missions along the shorelines in advance of troop movement. On March 8 all LCS(L)'s departed the area. On March 12, in anticipation of possible attempt by the enemy to effect evacuation of high ranking Japanese by submarine, an LCI(G) was ordered to patrol the coast line beyond our lines to observe for and prevent any such attempt. This patrol was continued nightly thereafter until the island was secure.

19. One Mortar Unit continued to be assigned each night to deliver harassing fire. Enemy counter fire continued to require the assignment of a destroyer or cruiser to provide support for the harassing unit. On departure of Units #1, #2, and #5 from the area on February 26, Units #3 and #4 were reorganized into 5-ship divisions. Due to the reduced size of the remaining units and their inexperience in Plan "A" fire delivery, night harassing fires were hereafter delivered using Plan "C". On February 28, two more mortar LCI's departed the area, leaving two 4-ship units available for mortar fire. On February 27 and for several days thereafter individual mortar LCI's were assigned during daylight to provide direct support to battalions designated by Headquarters Landing Force.

20. The remaining area into which night harassing fire could safely be delivered, required the employment of only one mortar LCI on the night of March 1. Thereafter harassing fires at night by these ships was discontinued. On March 3 all remaining mortar LCI's departed the area.

21. Ammunition expenditures by LCI types exclusive of pre-DOG Day expenditures, were as follows:

60,000	4"2 Mortar
8,000	4"5 BR Rockets
116,000	40mm
9,500	5"0 SSR Rockets

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SECTION (B)

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON FIRE SUPPORT EMPLOY-
MENT OF GUNBOAT, MORTAR, AND 5-INCH ROCKET LCI's

1. Gunboats, (LCI(G)'s and LCS(L)(3)'s)

(a) Heretofore in Central Pacific operations the ship to shore movement support by LCI gunboats has consisted of one full rocket salvo delivered on the beach at about HOW minus TEN minutes. At IWO JIMA the gunboat group made an early run toward shore between HOW minus NINETY and HOW minus FORTY-FIVE and delivered initial rocket salvos in an attempt to detonate possible inflamables on the beach well in advance of the time of landing. Another innovation at IWO JIMA was the loading and firing of a second rocket salvo during the ship to shore movement of the leading wave. The gunboats fired their first salvo at HOW minus TEN minutes as in past operations, then reloaded rocket racks as they moved in to a range of 600-700 yards from the beach and fired a second salvo at HOW minus FIVE minutes placing this salvo 300 to 500 yards inland. Since 4"5 rocket fire is more neutralizing than destructive and since its short range prevents its use for neutralization of inland areas, its use has rarely been requested after a landing. The best employment of 4"5 rockets therefore is beach neutralization just prior to the landing and their employment for initial and additional salvos at IWO JIMA is recommended for future landing support.

(b) Prearranged fire schedules provided for the initial assignment of one gunboat unit to support each of the two flank battalions on the beach. Replacement naval gunfire liaison officers and spotters were embarked in the gunboat unit flagship to direct the fire until communications were established with the spotter ashore. This plan provided an excellent neutralizing fire on the flanks of the landing beach and was found to be so effective that the Landing Force requested continuous assignment of one or more gunboats to the battalion on the flanks of the front line for the remainder of the operation.

2. Mortar LCI's

(a) This was the first operation in which LCI's mounting mortars have been employed by the Fifth Amphibious Force. Their primary mission, as conceived in the initial planning, was the delivery of heavy harassing fire at night to prevent the initiation of organized counter attacks. Their support with this fire was most gratifying and materially reduced the demands for harassing fire by destroyers and cruisers.

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(b) Two methods of delivering harassing mortar fire at night were employed at IWO JIMA: (1) Plan (A) of the standard mortar fire plans, in which 5 LCI's steam on an elliptical track around an LCI acting as reference ship. Ships fire singly in succession during the two minutes run on the leg on which they are pointed toward the target area. (2) Plan (C) in which the 6 LCI's of a division lie to on a line, 200 yards between ships, and fire when the ships head is between prescribed limiting lines of fire. Both plans have many advantages and disadvantages. Since it is next to impossible to hold an LCI on an accurate heading for a long period when dead in the water, plan (C) is unsuitable for interdiction fire where continuous and fairly accurate fire along a definite line is required. Harassing fire, which requires irregular volume and rate of fire with an unsystematic pattern and coverage of the area harassed, is especially typical of the fire to be expected of six LCI's, dead in the water all on different headings between prescribed limits. Plan (A), on the other hand, has all the fire delivery characteristics most suited for interdiction fire and least suited for harassing fire.

(c) The 3200 yard range limit of LCI mortar fire requires these ships to approach as close to shore as safe navigation permits in order to place their fire as far inland as possible. On a well defended island such as IWO JIMA, this close approach to shore drew considerable enemy fire even at night. LCI mortar ships found good use for their bow 40mm in delivery of counter-battery fire in self protection, but this was found insufficient and it became necessary to assign one of the general support destroyers or cruisers to cover the nightly harassing mortar LCI unit. In making plans for delivery of night (or day) harassing fire by mortar LCI's, the plans should incorporate the employment of a destroyer, for counter-battery protection of the harassing unit. This ship should work with the Mortar Unit Commander on a common frequency.

(d) On request, individual mortar LCI's were assigned to battalions for direct support, generally to those battalions whose flanks were along the shoreline as in the case of gunboat support. Preliminary reports indicate that this support was more in the form of harassing or neutralization fire for the battalion supported. In rough water, the accuracy of LCI mortar fire in deflection is greatly decreased by rolling and can not be safely called for in areas close to own troops. LCI mortar fire for direct support should therefore only be expected to accomplish harassing or preparation neutralizing fire for an advance into areas within range of the LCI mounted mortar.

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(e) While the accuracy in deflection of mortar fire from LCI's is greatly effected by rolling and variations in ship head, its accuracy in range is quite dependable and relatively unaffected by motion of the ship. It is therefore very suitable for neutralizing fire over the heads of troops when the line of fire is perpendicular to the line of troops. Its high trajectory makes it ideal for use when ships and troops located between the target and firing ships preclude the use of high velocity flat trajectory fire. At IWO JIMA, the neutralization of large areas inland from the beaches was effectively delivered by mortar fire from LCI's on a line parallel to and 1000 yards from shore. This fire was not provided however, until HOW plus TWENTY minutes. Using Plan "B" with desired modifications, mortar LCI's should be employed in the boat lanes to provide beach neutralization just prior to the time the first wave leaves the line of departure and during its run to the beach. They should precede the first wave by any desired distance, stop and lie to not less than 600 yards (minimum firing range) from shore, and continue mortar fire on the beach until the first wave is about 200 yards from shore. At this time the fire should be lifted about 200 to 500 yards inland and lifted in predetermined steps thereafter according to a prearranged time schedule based on anticipated troop advance. This type of moving close support was provided at IWO JIMA using 5"/38 AA Common fire with 1200 foot second charges.

3. 5"O SSR Rocket LCI's (LCI(L)(3)(R)(RCM)'s)

(a) This was the first amphibious operation in the Pacific in which 5"O spin stabilized rockets have seen action. Nine rocket LCI's were employed at IWO JIMA to deliver harassing rocket fire on the MOTOYAMA area from dawn until 1300 on DCG Day at which time all rockets were expended. These new type rockets have a maximum range of 5250 yards but when fired at this range from a rolling LCI the inaccuracy of the fire makes it unsuitable for anything but harassment on areas well removed from own troops.

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SECTION (C)

NARRATIVE OF NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT AFTER DEPARTURE CTF 51

1. Control of Naval Gunfire Support was turned over to CTF 53 at 0800, March 9, 1945 when CTF 51 departed from the area. The voice radio calls of CTF 51 and CTF 52 were taken over and employed by CTF 53 on all naval gunfire circuits in order not to disclose to the enemy the knowledge that CTF 51 had departed.
2. Fire support requirements on March 9 consisted of four destroyers and one heavy cruiser furnishing call fires for battalions designated by Headquarters Landing Force. These requirements rapidly diminished as occupation of the island continued. On March 12 TUSCALOOSA and SALT LAKE CITY were released and departed from the area. After March 10, VOF spotting services were not required and on March 12 the WAKE ISLAND and its VOF squadron departed from the area.
3. By March 13, fire support requirements had been reduced to two destroyers for day and night support. When situations permitted, division naval gunfire officers were embarked in destroyers to aid in identifying targets and to supervise the fire for special missions.
4. IWO JIMA was officially declared secure at 1800, March 16, 1945. Night illumination by destroyers was required for several days thereafter until a difficult pocket of enemy resistance on the north tip of the island was eliminated and mopping up completed.
5. As surf conditions and availability of ships permitted, parties of interested officers from fire support ships were sent ashore for tours of inspection of enemy defensive installations and results of naval bombardment.
6. Total ammunition expenditures from March 9, to 0800, March 17 were as follows:

8" HC	300 rounds
8" AP	50 "
5"/38 AAC	4904 "
5"/38 WP	77 "

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SECTION (D)

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIRE SUPPORT

1. The assignment of an Amphibious Group Commander to conduct and coordinate the pre-DOG Day bombardment of IWO JIMA was highly successful in ensuring accurate damage evaluation, systematic destruction, coordination of effort and reliable intelligence information. It is recommended that the officer assigned this mission in future operations continue with this systematic destruction of specific targets clear of the close support areas and coordinate target intelligence throughout the assault and occupation of the objective, using ships and aircraft assigned to him daily for this purpose.
2. The rapid expansion of available types of fire support imposes a control problem of such complexity and magnitude that a division of control appears desirable for effective employment of all types. It is recommended that in future operations, as at IWO JIMA, the control of gunboat rocket and mortar support craft be placed under the attack force commander. Since LCI types not immediately occupied in fire support are assigned other duties such as salvage, patrol, smoke protection, mail trips, press, etc, it is particularly desirable that the attack force commander control all LCI types whether for fire support or for the other duties for which he is normally responsible.
3. The amount of starshell illumination requested continues to be excessive and appeared to be greater than necessary considering the amount of front to be illuminated at IWO JIMA. Frequently as many as eight stars were observed burning at one time when no emergency existed. Unlike SAIPAN and TINIAN where starshells were fired at irregular intervals with the purpose of catching the enemy in the open by surprise, their use at IWO JIMA appeared to attempt continuous illumination for each, or nearly each, battalion in assault. Illumination by one ship is considered ample for each regiment in assault unless more than three battalions are attached or the terrain is such that one ship could not possibly deliver adequate illumination. The failure to use starshell illumination economically and judiciously necessitated establishing maximum expenditure allowances early in the operation to prevent exhaustion of the supply. The present initial load of 50 pounds of starshells per gun for destroyers is considered adequate; to increase this will require an undesirable reduction of AA Common.
4. Confusion and misunderstandings at SAIPAN and IWO JIMA demonstrated the undesirability of having the officer controlling gunfire support and the Commanding General of the landing force in different ships although this was necessary for other considerations. Problems which arise during the critical period of establishing a definite beachhead can be more easily and more quickly solved if these two officers are able to discuss a problem and agree on its solution personally rather than over

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the radio. If it is necessary to have the Headquarters of the Landing Force on a ship other than the one controlling naval gunfire, it is strongly recommended that troop naval gunfire officer be located with the officer controlling gunfire support and have the authority to make all but major decisions.

Note: All times throughout Part (IV) are KING (minus 10 zone) time.

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PART (V)

AIR SUPPORT

1. General

(a) The Air Support Control Unit functioned as a relief and re-laying station for the unit on the USS ELDORADO from DOG Day until 0800K, 9 March, at which time control was transferred to the USS AUBURN. At this time control of the Combat Air Patrol and Anti-Submarine Patrol became a function of this unit. Control of close troop support missions was delegated to the Landing Force Air Support Control Unit. A summary of daily air operations for 9 March through 26 March is included in paragraph 4. Operations.

2. Comments

(a) For the first time in an amphibious operation in this theatre an Air Support Control Unit was landed and set up ashore with the intention of actively controlling close troop support missions. This unit was composed of Marine and Naval officers (with the former predominating) and Marine enlisted technicians and operators. The liaison that this unit was able to accomplish by virtue of the proximity (75 ft.) to the Landing Force Command Post far surpassed anything that has ever gone before in Air Support operations and as a result, troop requests for air support were run much more expeditiously than ever before. It is considered that a Landing Force Air Support Control Unit is an absolute necessity for the control of troop support missions. However, it is felt that the Landing Force Air Support Control Unit tried to assume the control of close support missions before they had monitored all the nets long enough to get the routine and to pick up control without any lost motion. Some equipment difficulties entered into the picture since this was the first service use of the radios. It is felt that in future operations when the LFASCU is preparing to assume control of troop support missions, they should monitor all nets which they expect to operate for a minimum of 12 hours. At quiet periods, radio checks should be made. Net control officers expecting to join the LFASCU for the operation of the major strike nets (SAD-1, SAD-2, SAD-S, SAR, or SAO) should be embarked on the controlling AGC and the relief AGC. They should disembark after the close of operations one day and be ready to assume control on a thoroughly tested shore-based set-up early the following morning. Lost motion was noted particularly during the IWO JIMA Operation in that when the LFASCU attempted to assume control of troop support missions that they did not have the complete current lists of Air Liaison Parties' requests. After this hiatus was closed, however, the LFASCU did

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an excellent piece of work and in many cases gave the troops much more nearly what they wanted than was ever possible before the inception of this system.

(b) A new method of coordinating artillery fire and air strikes was used successfully for the first time during this operation. A brief of each air strike was broadcast over the Corps Artillery Fire Direction Control net. Each air strike was given a number and the following information was given: time bracket, target area, direction of approach and retirement, number and type of aircraft, minimum altitude and any other pertinent information. Each battery of artillery was able to control its fire so as not to interfere with strikes, but a complete shut-down of artillery was only necessary once or twice to run a treetop level Napalm attack. Whenever two or more battalions of artillery were firing on the same target, that information was passed to CASCU with the maximum ordinate and aircraft were warned to keep clear. This proved a very satisfactory method of coordination from the Air Support view-point and it is believed to be satisfactory from the artillery view-point.

(c) Coordination with naval gunfire still can only be obtained (after fire support has been turned over to the Shore Fire Control Parties) by placing "Flan Victor" (limit of maximum ordinate at 1200 ft.) in effect, thus imposing a minimum altitude limitation on the air strike. Fortunately naval gunfire ordinates at the ranges most commonly used are below 1200 ft. and "Flan Victor" does not impose a serious limitation. But the minimum altitude restriction on the air strike places a considerable limitation on the aircraft since bombing and strafing accuracy is greatly increased with decrease in dropping and firing altitude.

(d) In general, communications were excellent on all Air Support nets on the flagship of TF 53. This ASCU played an important role in maintaining, by relay, communications between other Air Support participants. On several occasions this unit assumed complete control of various nets during periods of materiel failure in other units. At night considerable CW interference reduced the efficiency of the high frequency circuits. Numerous instances still exist of aircraft and other stations using the improper net, and of not maintaining good radio discipline on the correct net. Air Liaison Parties showed evidence on numerous occasions of not being familiar enough with their radio equipment. Both Carrier and Target Anti-Submarine Patrol being on the same frequency was the cause of considerable interference.

3. Recommendations

(a) This ASCU was composed of 15 officers and acted as a relief team during the IWO JIMA Operation. Considerable difficulty was

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experienced in adequately monitoring all nets, and still having officers available to relieve others for meals etc. From this experience, it is felt strongly that the minimum number of officers that a complete operating Air Support Control Unit can function with is nineteen. Seventeen of these are required for the operating team, including net control officers, communications officers and intelligence officers. Once trained, this team is an intra-dependent, cooperating unit which cannot afford to have any member on call to any outside source. All planning and overall jurisdiction of operations must be done by officers who are not a part of the operating team itself. The organization of new strikes, formation of plans for the following day, changes in existing plans and other strategic problems must be worked out by officers who are intimately familiar with, but not involved in, the working of the operating team itself. The planning staff is composed of the ComASCU and the planning officer and is required in the ASCU on the flagship having control of an amphibious operation. No planning staff is required on relief flagships unless it is contemplated that they assume control without being able to transfer any officers from the controlling ASCU.

(b) A recommended organization chart follows.

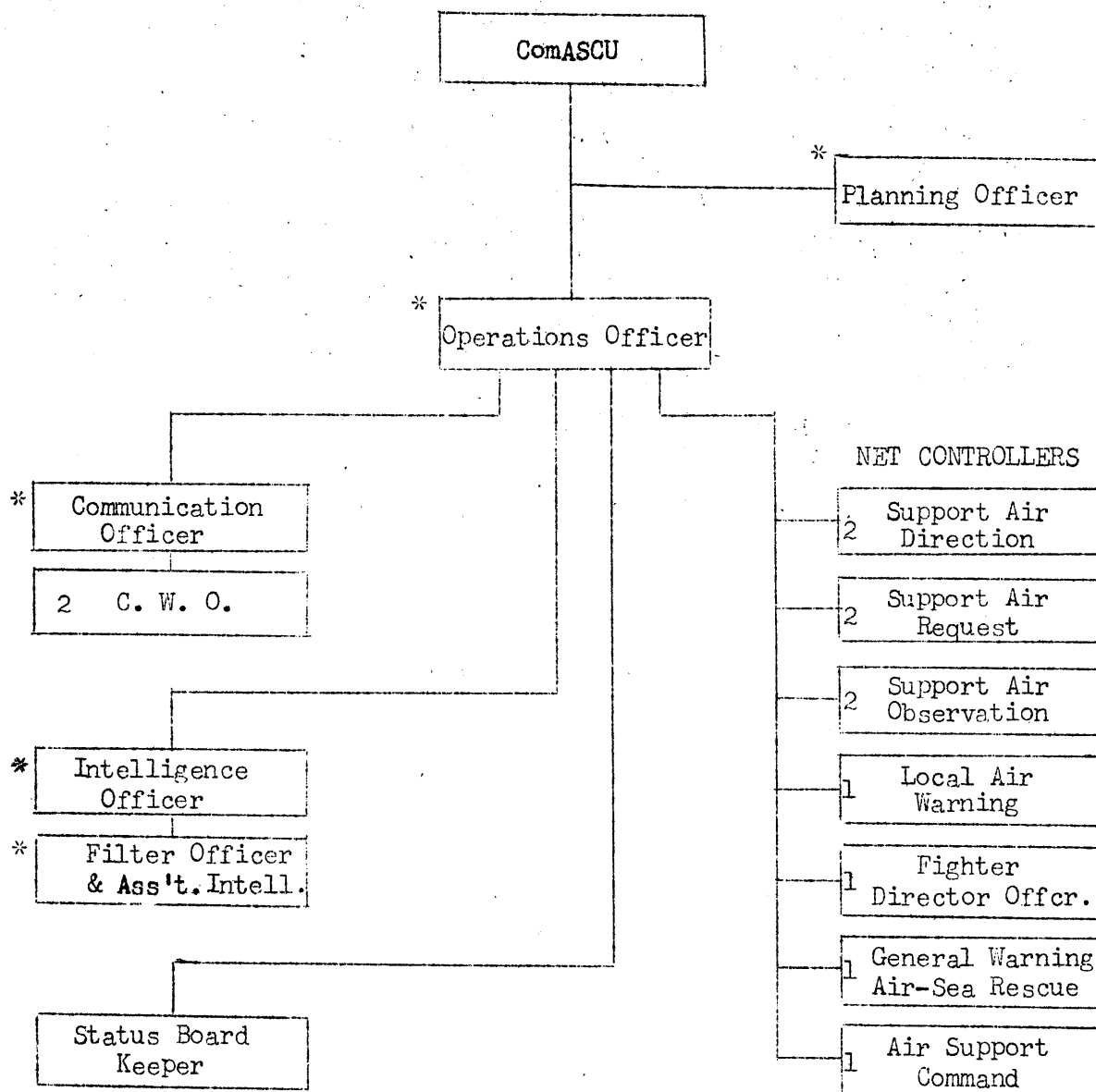
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RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATION

AIR SUPPORT CONTROL UNIT
for
FLAGSHIP CONTROLLING AN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION



* Available to relieve net controllers for meals etc.

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(c) The advantages of having former Air Liaison Officers as Support Air Request Net Controllers are too numerous to mention. The assignment of officers to ASCU's and LFASCU's should be made to include at least one such officer. On account of the numerous recent developments and specialization in the technique of aerial anti-submarine warfare, one member of every ASCU should have the complete three-weeks course in Anti-Submarine Warfare as given at NAS, Kaneohe, T.H. The superficial three-day course is sufficient for other net controllers. Another member of every ASCU should have previous Air-Sea Rescue training or experience.

(d) The possibility of consolidating the Support Carrier Area ASP and the Target ASP should be investigated. If this could be done a great saving in VTB aircraft would be effected.

(e) The assignment of a secondary Support Air Request Net would have a definite value. The present net is always so busy that it would be hazardous to conduct two simultaneous close support strikes. With a secondary net available, this could be done by having the ALP's involved change to secondary for the duration of the strike. All requests for new strikes must be made on primary. The Local Air Warning Secondary was not used at IWO JIMA despite numerous Hunter-killer operations. Its use as SAR-Secondary is suggested.

(f) Communications: Omit the assignment of frequencies between 30 and 40 megacycles in future communication plans for air support, except for Inter-Fighter Director net. During the briefing period for future operations, stress even more the fact that all stations must use the proper net and not come up on a net which has been assigned for another purpose.

4. Operations

(a) Prior to DOG Day, Air Support Operations were controlled by ASCU, TF 52. From DOG Day until 0800K, 9 March 1945, ASCU, TF 51 assumed control. At 0800K, 9 March 1945, control of Air Support was turned over to the ASCU, TF 53 which, at 1000K, became TG 51.21. Control of troop support missions remained delegated to the Landing Force Air Support Control Unit. At this time, day and night CAP was being flown by land-based fighters. All other support aircraft were CVE-based. On 9 March 1945, land-based fighters furnished call strike groups in addition to the CVE groups. On 10 March 1945, all call strike groups were made up of land-based fighters and at 1430K this date a shore-based VMTB squadron especially trained in Anti-Submarine Warfare assumed the ASP. On 11 March 1945, the CVE's furnished no aircraft whatsoever for the support of operations in this area. Close troop support missions were flown by shore-based Army aircraft through 1100K, 14 March 1945,

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when the last strike was completed. Strategic strikes on the BONINS were flown daily by these aircraft commencing 11 March 1945 and continuing through the time that IWO JIMA was turned over to CTF 94.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus EIGHTEEN 9 March 1945

CVE planes furnished close support missions. These were augmented by X-CAP P-51's which gave some excellent close strikes. Very close support missions were run today due to shrinking enemy territory.

One B-29 with engine trouble made safe emergency landing at IWO Field and will remain until engine replaced. Plane found and guided in by ASCU PhibGrp 2.

A P-51 ground looped on landing and crashed into two parked P-51's. One plane burned. Pilot of plane injured.

The USS ENTERPRISE is leaving tonight and all night CAP will be flown by Army P-61's.

Enemy planes came into area last night but did not attack. Night fighter made contact but no kill, due to pronounced evasive action of enemy plane.

A dispatch came out this evening from Landing Force Headquarters that Carrier planes will no longer be needed for close support. It doesn't seem likely that much more air support for strikes will be needed in this operation.

B-29's are making 300 plane strike tonight on TOKYO.

Planes Used in Strikes

VF	112	
VT	29	
Total	141	Total Sorties 172

Bombs Used in Strikes

Total Weight

500#	35	17,500#
250#	20	5,000#
100#	192	19,200#
Rockets	292	17,520#
	Total	59,220#
	Total Tons	29.6

Missions

Bombing and strafing including rockets - 18.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

<u>Source of Planes</u>	<u>VF</u>	<u>VT</u>
<u>TG 51.26</u>	104	29

SARGENT BAY
TULAGI
WAKE ISLAND
SAGINAW BAY

IWO JIMA P-51's	46	
Total	150	29

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus NINETEEN 10 March 1945

Last night a night ASP plane from CVE, USS TULAGI could not get wheels down to land at base and made a safe wheels up emergency landing at IWO JIMA Airfield #1. AGATE BASE reported slight damage to this plane and all her crew safe.

Nine depth charges and a few flares and depth charge markers were delivered at the airfield by X-ASP planes at 0900K this morning. This delivery was continued during the morning by Carrier based ASP planes to help supply the shore-based ASP.

At 1430K, VMTB shore-based TBM's took over target Anti-Submarine Patrol and relieved carrier from this duty.

Today's air support has been confined to the extreme northern tip of the Island, target areas 250 and 251. More air support today furnished by land-based P-51's.

Five B-29's on trip back from TOKYO raid, made emergency landings at IWO Airfield today. One was damaged on landing. Three were lost, and CASCU PhibGrp 2 found them on radar screen and guided them in to field for landing.

Only seven support missions flown today.

Planes Used in Strikes

VF	31	
VT	0	
Total	31	Total Sorties 74

Bombs Used in Strikes

Total Weight

500#	38	19,000#
Napalm	10	
Total		19,000#
Total Tons		9.5

Missions

Bombing and strafing	7
Napalm (included in above)	3

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Action Report

ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

<u>Source of Planes</u>	<u>VF</u>	<u>VT</u>
Land-based P-51's	45	
TU 51.26 (CVE's)	23	2
Total	68	2

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus TWENTY 11 March 1945

Very little close support today with only 3 missions run. These three missions were bombing and strafing in target areas 250 and 251 against blockhouses and personnel.

In mission number two, a bomb ricocheted and exploded close to friendly troops but no casualties resulted.

Seventeen P-51's, with a 2x500# bomb load each, took off for CHICHI JIMA at 0905K and returned safely at 1115K.

Landing Force ASCU operated today from radio equipped jeeps and some personnel have left the Island.

Results of today's P-51 bombing and strafing strike on CHICHI JIMA: the seventeen planes were from the Fighter Squadron 47 of the 15th Fighter Group AAF; scored 22 hits on Susaki Field on runway and among planes. One direct hit two probables and five near misses on smaller ships in harbor. Strafed Susaki Field and Kitamura town and Okimura town on HANA JIMA. Set fire to radio weather station on Okimura. 13,442 rounds of .50 cal. ammunition expended. 32x500# bombs expended on mission. Excellent mission.

Planes Used in Strikes

P-51's 15

Bombs Used in Strikes Total Weight

500# 30 15,000#

Total Tons 7.5

Missions

Bombing and strafing 3

Source of Planes

Land-based P-51's 17

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus TWENTY-ONE 12 March 1945

CVE's, SARGENT BAY, TULAGI, WAKE ISLAND, and SAGINAW BAY left the area last night after weeks of excellent performance in air support missions.

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Action Report

ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

A total of seven B-29's returning from NAGOYA strike made emergency landings at IWO JIMA field this morning. One came in with only two engines operating and some had one engine out. Two were found and vectored into field and others were led in by planes of their own group. Three planes departed IWO the same day.

Two B-24's on CHICHI JIMA strike ran low on gasoline and made safe landings at Airfield #1 last night. Later took off for base.

A submarine was sighted by an Anti-Submarine Patrol Plane at 1145. Submarine submerged and plane dropped Sono-buoy and depth charges. USS DEEDE (DD 263) was assigned as Hunter-killer ship and operations were continued through the night.

Planes Used in Strikes

VF 16 P-51's

Bombs Used in Strikes

Total Weight

500# 32 16,000#

Total Tons 8

Missions:

Bombing and Strafing 2

Source of Planes

15th Fighter Group AAF 16 P-51's

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus TWENTY-TWO 13 March 1945

No close air support today because enemy area too restricted.

OY plane carrying 5th MarDiv Air Observer reported crashed in target area 235 H. Crash itself was not observed as plane went down behind ridge.

One B-24 and one B-29 made safe emergency landings at IWO, South Field. B-24 had one engine out and B-29 was leaking gas from two engines. Both planes took off for base.

Sixteen P-51's from Fighter Group 15, AAF, carrying 2x500# bombs each, took off for CHICHI JIMA and dive bombed and strafed installations. Targets were Radar Station, Susaki Airfield and wharves and docks. Direct hits were scored. Intense and accurate light flak.

Hunter-killer operations concluded at 1900 today. Results were negative.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus TWENTY-THREE 14 March 1945

One close support mission was run today with very good results. Air Liaison Parties said that troops made gains after strike.

Nine B-29's made safe emergency landings at IWO JIMA. Eight of

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

these planes took off during the day and returned to base. This makes a total of twenty-four B-29's that have made emergency landings here since the operation began.

Two ASP planes attacked disappearing radar contacts with negative results. Combat Air Patrol investigated a reported ship at MINAMI with negative results. Sixteen P-51's with 2x500# bombs each went to CHICHI JIMA this afternoon. Four planes hit gun positions North of Susaki Airdrome and weather station. One made safe landing although damaged while on strike.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus TWENTY-FOUR

15 March 1945

No close support strikes today.

An ASP plane reported an oil slick and dye marker near KITA IO JIMA. On further investigation, it was reported that the sighting was a sulphur spring.

5th MarDiv Air Observer was wounded in foot and leg by AA and returned to base.

Six B-24 search planes and six PV search planes staged at IWO Airfield #1 en route to base.

A life raft and dye marker was reported. On further investigation, results were reported negative. Another ASP reported two dye markers. Both investigated carefully, results negative.

Sixteen Mustangs, 2x500# bombs each, dive bombed and strafed targets in CHICHI JIMA and HAHAI JIMA. Targets were Susaki Airfield, CHICHI, gun emplacements, OKIMURA TOWN and military installations, and KITA MURA TOWN, HAHAI JIMA. No flak was encountered. Results difficult to observe due to weather. All returned safely to base.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus TWENTY-FIVE

16 March 1945

Sixteen Mustangs with 500# bombs, dive-bombed and strafed enemy installations on CHICHI JIMA. Targets were radio station, Sea-plane Base, gun positions and storage areas. No flak encountered. One flight reconnoitered HAHAI JIMA on return and spotted two small cargo vessels at KITAMURA. No attack due to shortage of ammo.

All organized resistance on IWO JIMA ceased at 1800K today.

At 1030K an ASP plane reported a definite sonar contact about fifteen miles north of the north tip of the Island. A Destroyer Escort was dispatched to conduct Hunter-Killer operations and arrived about 1245K. Radio contact between the plane and the DE was established. At 1825K the ASP had good sonar indications, so the DE stood off while the ASP dropped special ASW weapon. No detonation occurred. After a safe period the DE again closed the area and obtained its first sonar contact, but did not attack.

Hunter-Killer Operations continued throughout the night.

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ComPhibGrp 2 = IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus TWENTY-SIX

17 March 1945

One P-51 disappeared from his division while flying through overcast on CAP. Plane last seen in vertical dive at 2000 ft. Searches sent out have reported negative results.

Sixteen B-29's landed at IWO Airfield #2 on way back from Japan Empire raid. Ten took off and six remained on field for servicing.

Hunter-Killer operations from yesterday were discontinued at 1055K. No sonar contact since 1924, 16 March 1945. At 1100 the USS COTTEN (DD 669) picked up a sonar contact eight miles from HOT ROCKS. Hunter-Killer operations were begun at 1142K and continued throughout the afternoon and night. Results negative.

The ASP dropped sono-buoys on two oil slicks during the afternoon. One was negative, the other reported hearing propellor noises. No attacks were made. A tactical air observer reported a periscope wake close to shore near the north end of the Island. Investigation by ASP showed course of reported wake was parallel to that of a minesweeper. Evaluated as a paravane.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus TWENTY-SEVEN

18 March 1945

Hunter-Killer operations with USS COTTEN secured at 1640K. Negative results.

The Air Defense Control Center assumed operational control of ASP for indoctrination training in control.

Sixteen Mustangs with 24x500# bombs strafed and dive-bombed targets on CHICHI JIMA. One flight hit radar station, one flight hit radio direction finder and one hit barges in FUTAMI KO. Bombing results excellent. No flak.

One ASP plane reported himself lost at 1430. All radars looked for plane to give him a steer for base. All attempts to locate plane by radar and other methods failed and plane made a water-landing in an unknown location at 1647K. Searches by two Dumbo Rescue planes and two flights of P-51's were to no avail.

Four ASP planes made sono-buoy drops on suspected targets. All results were found negative. The USS McCALL (DD 400) reported that he had seen many whales in the vicinity of IWO during the day.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus TWENTY-EIGHT

19 March 1945

Sixteen Mustangs, 2x500# bombs, dive-bombed and strafed targets on CHICHI JIMA. One flight bombed and strafed Susaki Airfield. Secondary explosion following bomb bursts indicated having hit ammunition and storage area, Susaki. Three flights hit radio station and other military installations. Observation difficult due to clouds.

Searches continued for lost ASP who made water landing yesterday. Results negative.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

Three B-29's landed at IWO Field #2 today on way back from NAGOYA strike. One reported at 0625K that he was ditching at 80 miles, bearing 350 degrees from HOT ROCKS. Searches by 2 B-29 Dumbos, one surface craft and one PBY were negative.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus TWENTY NINE 20 March 1945

Two PBY Dumbos continued search for B-29 crew and lost TBM pilot. Results negative on the latter. At 1600K, Dumbo 3 reported sighting two rafts with 10 men at 331 degrees, 115 miles. The USS GATLING (DD 671) recovered ten survivors at 2035K, all in good condition.

P-51 strike to BONINS was cancelled on account of weather.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus THIRTY 21 March 1945

Sixteen Mustangs each with 2x500# bombs, dive-bombed and strafed enemy installations on CHICHI JIMA. Targets were barracks and radio stations. Fires were set by bombs and strafing. No flak.

No other air activity, except routine CAP, ASP and air evacuation planes.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus THIRTY-ONE 22 March 1945.

Fifty-three Mustangs from the second garrison fighter group arrived today.

Sixteen Mustangs with 2x500 pounders each, struck BONINS. Targets - weather station, fuel storage tanks, RDF installations and reservoir. Meager heavy flak, accurate in altitude but trailing. No activity observed on HAH A JIMA.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus THIRTY-TWO 23 March 1945

Fifteen Mustangs dive-bombed and strafed TAKINOURA TOWN, reservoir area, OKIMURA TOWN and gun laying radar. Flak meager and inaccurate.

A four-plane Anti-Sub Patrol plan was made effective today on account of low availability of TBF aircraft. This plan will be flown continuously until changed. Thirty additional Mustangs arrived from the MARIANNAS, thus completing the second garrison fighter group.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY DOG plus THIRTY-THREE 24 March 1945

Two Mustang strikes against the BONINS were flown today. The morning strike skip-bombed and strafed naval installations and Susaki Airfield under a 1000 ft solid overcast. Flak was moderate, inaccurate. One flight of the afternoon strike hit the radar station. The other 3 flights were weathered out of CHICHI and HAH A, so hit targets on KITA IWO SHIMA en route to base.

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ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (V) - Air Support)

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus THIRTY-FOUR

25 March 1945

Four "Dreamboats" made emergency landings on Airfield #2 on returning from NAGOYA strike. All were reported as having taken off for Marianas bases.

Both Mustang strikes to the BONINS were cancelled on account of weather.

Only other air activity was routine CAP, ASP and transports.

AIR SUPPORT SUMMARY

DOG plus THIRTY-FIVE

26 March 1945

Due to presence of enemy aircraft in the area last night, 21 P-51 Mustangs left for a special dawn strike on the BONINS this morning with Susaki Airfield and enemy aircraft as the primary target. The runway was cratered and the area thoroughly strafed. One new Betty was observed and probably destroyed. Moderate accurate light flak. All planes returned at 0800K.

At 0800K responsibility for all defenses, including air, at IWO JIMA passed to Commander Forward Area.

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Action Report
ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA

PART (VI)

MEDICAL

SECTION (A)

NARRATIVE

1. Preparation in Hawaiian Area

(a) Two months prior to rehearsal exercises in MAALAE BAY and KAHOO LAWE ISLAND area 11-18 January 1945, conferences were conducted periodically with all medical personnel involved in the operation. Included in these conferences were the beach party medical officers, shore party medical officers, SMO's of APA's, LST(H) medical officers, and staff medical officers of TransRons. All medical groups were briefed in their roles pertaining to medical matters and evacuation. The Medical Plan was analyzed in detail and problems of coordination and general questions were freely discussed to the mutual benefit of all participants.

(b) LST(H) 929 was designated to carry the Whole-Blood Bank for distribution of whole blood to forces afloat and ashore. Prior to leaving HONOLULU, the following equipment and personnel were embarked for the care and maintenance of whole blood:

- 2 - 150 cu. ft. reefer boxes (one on 2½-ton truck and one on deck)
- 2 - 350 cu. ft. reefer boxes
- 2 - Ice flake machines
- 1 - Jeep
- 1 - 14 x 14 tent
- 1 - Chief Pharmacist's Mate
- 2 - Hospital Corpsmen
- 1 - 2½-ton truck

Reefers and ice flake machines were self-contained units operated by gasoline engines. At the objective, when opportunity was presented, one ice flake machine, 2 reefers, 2½-ton truck, jeep, and maintenance personnel were to be landed and establish blood bank ashore under Landing Force supervision.

2. Chain of evacuation

(a) Four LST(H)'s, or casualty evacuation control LST's, were especially equipped with medical personnel and supplies, and their function was to screen casualties and distribute them equably among available transports and hospital ships. One LST(H) was available to each of the

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Action Report

ComPhibGrp 2 - IWO JIMA (Part (VI) - Medical; Section (A) - Narrative)

colored beaches, or two for each Marine Division. The planned method of evacuation was as follows: All boats, LVT's, or DUKW's which evacuated wounded from beaches were to proceed to their respective evacuation control LST(H)'s. Those casualties who were unable to stand the boat trip to transports or hospital ships were to be transferred to the LST(H) for treatment until such time as their condition warranted further transfer. These were to be lifted by cranes in Mills-Harris slings and lowered into the tank deck where first aid and shock treatment were to be administered. All others were to remain in LCVP's and be sent to transports or hospital ships designated by the Evacuation Control officer. Those casualties arriving at LST(H)'s in LVT's or DUKW's were to be unloaded onto the pontoon barge alongside the LST(H) and retransferred into LCVP's and then directed to awaiting transports or hospital ships. This procedure relieved the LVT's and DUKW's for further military duty and also placed the casualties in faster and more comfortable boats.

(1) Each LST(H) had 4 surgeons and 27 corpsmen as permanent medical complement. This number was increased by the transfer of one Beach Party Medical Section (1 medical officer and 8 corpsmen) from APA's at the objective, giving each LST(H) 5 surgeons and 35 corpsmen. These beach party medical sections were on call by their TransRon commanders if needed. Besides the above complement the 4th MarDiv sent one medical officer and two corpsmen to the two LST(H)'s serving their beaches for recording purposes. This was a very satisfactory arrangement and is recommended for future operations.

3. Whole Blood

(a) At SAIPAN, prior to departure for objective, all ships were ordered to receive whole blood in quantities shown below:

Each APA	-	16	flasks
LSV OZARK	-	500	"
LST(H) 929	-	1100	"
Each AH	-	812	"
LST(H) 930, 931, 1033	-	16	"

Additional whole blood was to be furnished by incoming AH's or to be flown up from GUAM when air facilities were organized.

4. DOG Day (19 February)

(a) On DOG Day, 19 February, 30 APA's, 12 AKA's, one LSV (OZARK) and four LST(H)'s were available for evacuation of casualties. The LSV OZARK was available for casualty evacuation when APA's were not available. Her medical personnel of two medical officers, nine corpsmen, one Pharmacist, and one dental officer was reinforced by Medical

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Company A of the 3rd MarDiv and six beach party medical sections from six APA's, giving a total of 13 medical officers, 103 corpsmen, 2 dental officers, and 2 Pharmacists. Personnel of Medical Company A of 3rd MarDiv remained aboard until patients were removed at rear area.

(b) On DOG Day, HOW Hour (0900), beach parties had extreme difficulty in establishing and equipping their evacuation stations due to soft volcanic sand terrain and constant mortar and artillery barrage, together with machine gun fire. A heavy surf contributed to difficulties in beaching LCVP's for evacuation of casualties. Many of these small craft broached upon beaching. At 1300 one APA was ordered to close in to each LST(H) to receive casualties in order to eliminate the long ride to the transport area. This procedure was carried out throughout the operation in order to get casualties aboard as quickly as possible.

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