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ON *9 August 1987*

ANNEX FOX
TO
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION
OPERATIONS REPORT
IWO JIMA
RCT 23 REPORT



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

Serial No. 582 45

9 April, 1945.

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From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commanding General, Fourth Marine Division.
Subject: Operation Report (Iwo Jima).
Reference: (a) Division SOP No. 1-45.

1. Annex Fox to Division Operation Report (Iwo Jima)
is submitted in accordance with the reference.

W. W. Wensinger
W. W. WENSINGER.

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HSC_vsg REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX FOX TO DIVISION OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SECTION I

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

1. PLANNING.

(a) General:

Planning for the Iwo Jima operation was initiated on 28 October, 1944, with the release by Division Headquarters of an exercise in planning an amphibious operation. This exercise, based upon a projected landing on a hypothetical "X" Island of characteristics identical to Iwo Jima, was completed by mid-November. The planning during this phase was chiefly concerned with formulating the task organization, scheme of maneuver, embarkation, landing diagram, and landing craft control plan. It served to lay the ground work for subsequent planning, and, as such, was found to be of great value.

Study of the "X" Island problem was continuous up to the time of release by Division Headquarters, on 30 November, of the First Tentative Draft of Opn Plan No 49-44, the Preferred Plan for the landing on Iwo Jima. Planning for the landing on Iwo Jima was immediately initiated by the RCT, participation therein initially being limited to the essential members of the RCT Staff, and the BLT Commanders. Frequent conferences with higher echelons, and with the BLT Commanders, were held, and on 23 December, the RCT plan (Opn Plan 6-44, 1st Tentative Draft) and its basic annexes, was completed. The administrative planning for the operation was conducted concurrently, the loading order and the basic administrative order to accompany the operation plan being promulgated by 28 December. Study of the unloading plan continued until early in February, final details being complete by 5 February.

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By the 31st of December, the date of issue by Division Headquarters of Opn Plan 49-44 (Preferred), most of the modifications of the tentative draft had been accomplished. On 9 January, the RCT issued Opn Plan 6-44 (Preferred), complete in all details. Modifications issued subsequent to that time were concerned with changes in the embarkation of the tank company, and consequent adjustments to the landing schedule, and modifications to the Naval Gunfire Plan.

No tentative draft for the Alternate Plan was prepared by the RCT prior to embarkation. Following the issue by Division Headquarters of the First Tentative Draft of Opn Plan 50-44 (Alternate) on 30 December, close liaison was maintained with Division Headquarters on this plan. On 20 January, the RCT issued Opn Plan 1-45 (Alternate), complete, the Division Plan being issued the next day.

By the 22d of January, tactical plans for the landing on IWO JIMA had been distributed to all echelons of the RCT. Excepting the Naval Gunfire Plan, not completed until arrival at Saipan, adequate information for briefing of personnel was in the hands of troop commanders of all vessels upon sailing.

(b) Organization of the RCT.

The basic task organization of this RCT had been determined by the 1st of December, and was thereafter only slightly modified. As finally constituted by Opn Plan 6-44 (Preferred), it was as follows:

BLT 1 LtCol. R. HAAS, USMC.

1st Bn, 23d Mar.
1st Plat, R/W Co, 23d Mar.
2d and 4th Plats, and Det Hq Tk Sec, Co C, 4th Tk Bn.
1st Plat, Co C, 4th Engr Bn.
Co A, (Rein), 10th Amph Trac Bn.
Det, 1st JASCO.
Ln and FO Det, 2d Bn, 14th Mar.
Det (Int), H&S Co, 23d Mar.

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Det, Coll Sec, Co C, 4th Med Bn.
Co A, 133d NC Bn (Plus Co A, 4th Pion Bn less Dets)(SP).
Co A, 24th Repl Draft (SP).
Det, 8th F Dep (SP).

BLT 2 Major R. H. DAVIDSON, USMCR.

2d Bn, 23d Mar.
2d Plat, R/W Co, 23d Mar.
1st and 3d Plats, and Det Hq Tk Sec, Co C, 4th Tk Bn.
2d Plat, Co C, 4th Engr Bn.
Co B (Rein); 10th Amph Trac Bn.
Det, 1st JASCO.
Ln and FO Det, 2d Bn, 14th Mar.
Det (Int), H&S Co, 23d Mar.
Det, Coll Sec, Co C, 4th Med Bn.
Co B, 133d NC Bn (Plus Det Co A, 4th Pion Bn) (SP).
Co B, 24th Repl Draft (SP).
Det, 8th F Dep (SP).

BLT 3 Major J. S. SCALES, USMCR.

3d Bn, 23d Mar.
3d Plat, R/W Co, 23d Mar.
3d Plat, Co C, 4th Engr Bn.
Det, 1st JASCO.
Ln and FO Det, 2d Bn, 14th Mar.
Det, (Int), H&S Co, 23d Mar.
Det, Coll Sec, Co C, 4th Med Bn.
Co C, 133d NC Bn (SP)
Co C, 24th Repl Draft (SP).

SUPPORT GP Captain G. W. E. DAUGHTRY, USMC.

H&S Co, 23d Mar (less dets).
R/W Co, 23d Mar (less 37mm Plats).
10th Amph Trac Bn (less Co's A & B).
Co B, 2d Armd Amph Bn.

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Co C, 4th Tk Bn (less 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Plats, and Hq Tk Sec)
Co C, 4th Engr Bn (less 1st, 2d, and 3d Plats).
Co C, 4th MT Bn.
Co C, 4th Med Bn (less Coll Sec).
3d Plat, 4th MP Co.
3d Plat, Serv and Sup Co, 4th Serv Bn.
Det, 1st JASCO.
Ln Det, 2d Bn, 14th Mar.
2d Sec, 1st Prov Roc Det.
3d Band Sec, 4th Mar Div.
3d Sec, 7th Mar War Dog Plat.
133d NC Bn (less Co's A, B, C and D), (Plus Com Det 1st
JASCO and Det 4th Ord Co) (SP).
24th Repl Draft (less Co's A, B, C and E) (SP).
3d Plat, 442d Port Co (SP).

NOTE: All units less Rear Echelon.

(c) Problems during the Planning Phase.

The principal problems met during the planning, (other than from the nature of the terrain of the target, which will be discussed in Section III), arose from the uncertainty created by frequent modifications to the embarkation plan (and consequently to the landing schedule), and to the schedule of Naval Gunfire Support.

Throughout the planning phase, and up to the time of embarkation, the plan for embarkation was many times modified, due to frequent changes in personnel assigned for transportation from higher echelon, and in LST assignments. While these changes did not materially effect the basic plan, they multiplied the staff work required to ensure accuracy. In addition, the decision as to the means of transporting and landing of the tanks was delayed until after the RCT Hq had embarked and cleared Maui; this led to great difficulty in instructing and indoctrinating personnel involved, and to publishing and disseminating the adjustments to the landing schedule thus created.

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The Naval Gunfire Plan was not issued in its final form until after the Division had cleared the Hawaiian Area. This delay caused difficulty in dissemination of the plan to the lower echelons, and materially interfered with adequate indoctrination of assault personnel into the plan. The final plan was distributed to the elements of the RCT on 11 February, at Saipan.

2. TRAINING.

Beginning on 1 November, all training conducted by the RCT was calculated to complete readiness for the Iwo Jima operation. The main features of this training, extending up until embarkation of the RCT (less assault elements of assault BLTs), were as follows:

(a) Command Post Exercises: CPX's for the purposes of bringing to a higher state of proficiency the staff functioning of echelons to include the BLTs, particularly with reference to the coordination of supporting arms, and for improving technique and discipline in camouflaging command posts in areas lacking natural concealment, were conducted on 1 November, 29-30 November, 14 December, and 19 December. Excepting for the exercise on 19 December, which was conducted under VACLF control, these were conducted by the Division.

(b) Amphibious Training: During the period 14-19 November, the RCT embarked and conducted amphibious exercises at Maalaea Bay, Maui. Most of the combat elements of the RCT participated. Of the units normally attached the principal elements not participating were the service units and about 50% of the LVTs of the attached Amph Trac Bn. The Naval Construction Battalion and the Pioneer Company constituting the basic elements of the RCT Shore Party had become available for training on 5 November, and participated. Particular attention was given to Shore Party training during the exercise, inasmuch as the attached Naval Construction Battalion had had no previous experience at Shore Party work.

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The time available permitted two non-tactical BLT landing exercises (on 17-18 November), and one tactical RCT landing. Each assault BLT was enabled to conduct landings from LSTs in LVTs at least once, closely simulating the plan projected for Iwo Jima. The reserve BLT in each instance landed in LCVPs and LCMs from the APA on which it was embarked, simulating the Iwo Jima plan.

Except for the Shore Party training, and for the limited opportunity to rehearse the plan for landing on Iwo Jima, the amphibious exercises were of little benefit to the RCT. Nearly all the personnel participating were thoroughly experienced in amphibious techniques, and the replacements which brought the regiment to combat strength, for whom such training would have been of great benefit, were not made available until 22 November, after the close of this phase of training. However this training was worth while because it afforded an opportunity for the new shipping involved to conduct much-needed amphibious training with troops present.

(c) Tactical Inspection: On 22 November, the Commanding General conducted a tactical inspection of RCT 23. For this purpose, the RCT was organized as indicated in the Task Organization, except that the attached amphibian tractor personnel did not participate, and certain of the attached service units were only present by representation. The combat elements of the RCT were present with full combat equipment, formed into the landing craft boat-loads which were to be employed in the Iwo Jima landing. Although the RCT was found to be in an excellent state of readiness, a somewhat false impression was created since the replacements which joined on this date could not be tied into the organization.

(d) Combined-Arms Training: Training with the arms attached to and supporting the RCT was conducted by the RCT during the period 23-26 November, emphasizing infantry-tank-artillery coordination, and with simulated air strikes on 26 November. Naval gunfire support was constructive. Additional infantry-tank-artillery training was conducted by each BLT during the period 8-11 December.

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Thereafter, little opportunity was available to conduct problems on the battalion level, and, until the rehearsal exercises, no opportunity was presented for further RCT training.

(e) Individual and Small-Unit Training: As late as four weeks prior to embarkation, the battalions lacked such key personnel as trained gunners for mortars and machine guns, BAR men, etc. The late joining of the replacements, and the necessity for conducting larger unit training without further delay prevented pursuing a satisfactorily coordinated and progressive training program. As opportunity was available after 23 November, individual and small-unit training was accelerated, particular attention being given to instruction and firing of organic weapons, familiarization with Jap weapons and equipment, and thorough instruction in Jap mines and booby-traps. Small unit training designed to complete absorption of replacement personnel within their units was concurrent with individual training, and continued until embarkation.

The need for earlier assignment of replacements cannot be over-emphasized. It is strongly felt that the late assignment of replacements, coming during a period of planning for the imminent operation, and the multitude of details connected therewith, prevented adequate training of these replacements, seriously affecting the combat efficiency of this RCT.

3. EMBARKATION.

(a) General.

The general plan for embarking the RCT was to embark the assault elements of the RCT, and certain special equipment, aboard LSTs and LSMs, and embark the remainder of the RCT (less base rear echelon) aboard ships of the assigned transport division.

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(b) LSTs:

Seven LSTs were assigned to the RCT for transporting assault personnel and equipment. Three of these were assigned for transport to each of the two assault BLTs, less their support groups. On its three LSTs, each assault BLT embarked its rifle companies, engineer platoon, NGF and artillery FOs, tank and shore party reconnaissance parties, an advance BLT command echelon including the NGF liaison party, and the reinforced LVT company for landing these personnel. Each LST carried 17 LVTs (LVT(2)s or LVT(4)s), and, for the landing, approximately 13 officers and 384 enlisted men. Owing to restrictions imposed on the capacity of the LSTs for the voyage between Hawaii and Saipan, the forward staging area, an average of 7 officers and 145 enlisted men of the units assigned to the LSTs could not be initially embarked thereon. Except for this group, embarkation of personnel and equipment of the six troop LSTs was accomplished during the period 7-11 January. The personnel indicated above, not initially embarked, accompanied the remainder of the RCT aboard transports, and finally transferred to their assigned LSTs at Saipan, on 11 February. However, for preliminary rehearsal these elements were transferred to their respective LSTs for all rehearsals.

The seventh LST of this RCT's group carried the 17 amphibian tanks of the attached amphibian tank company, under RCT control, these being embarked at Saipan on 10-11 February.

(c) LSMs:

Five LSMs were assigned to the RCT for transport and landing of special equipment of the RCT. Of these, one each was assigned to the two assault BLTs for shore party equipment, and were loaded on 5 January. The remaining three were assigned to the 18 vehicles of the attached tank company, these loading on 18 January.

(d) Transports:

For the remainder of the RCT (less base rear echelon),

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four APAs (type C-2 hull) and one AKA on TransDiv 45 were assigned, being allocated as follows:

APA 196 (USS LOGAN)	Primary RCT Hqs and SPT GP (less dets)
APA 158 (USS NEWBERRY)	BLT 1
APA 207 (USS MIFFLIN)	BLT 2
APA 154 (USS LOWNDES)	Alternate RCT Hq and BLT 3
AKA 60 (USS LEO)	Dets RCT SPT GP

Including Corps and Division troops embarked for transportation, totals of personnel embarked were as follows:

	<u>HAWAII</u>	<u>SAIPAN</u>	<u>SAIPAN</u>	<u>IWO JIMA</u>
	<u>Off</u>	<u>Enl</u>	<u>Off</u>	<u>Enl</u>
APA 196	86	1331	76	1025
APA 158	74	1279	42	715
APA 207	68	1285	51	918
APA 154	59	1379	65	1396
AKA 60	5	156	5	166

Personnel of the RCT and Div Troops embarked aboard APAs on 31 December, and aboard the AKA 60 on 7-10 January, at Maui.

4. PRELIMINARY REHEARSAL (HAWAIIAN AREA).

During the period 13-18 January this RCT, less the attached tank company (embarked on 18 January), and the attached amphibian tank company (embarked at Saipan 10-11 February), participated in the rehearsal exercises conducted by VACLIF in the Maalaea Bay Area, Maui. These exercises, designed to rehearse the ship-to-shore movement planned for the Iwo Jima Operation and to correct any deficiencies noted, were conducted in several phases.

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In preparation for the preliminary rehearsal, while the LSTs and the AKA were loading, those elements of the RCT embarked on APAs participated in amphibious exercises in the Maalaea Bay Area, on the 7th and 8th of January. These exercises were limited to debarkation, formation of boat waves, and dispatching of waves from the LD. They were designed to give the maximum training to the comparatively inexperienced naval personnel, particularly wave guide and control personnel, and as such were effective.

On 13 January, assault BLTs, the reserve BLT, and initial elements of the RCT Support Group, were boated and dispatched from the Line of Departure on schedule, all waves turning away from the beach when 300 yards off shore and returning to parent ships. Except for shore party personnel, no landings were executed.

On 14 January, the same elements participated, with landings and a short advance inland being made. Reembarkation was effected during the afternoon.

On 15 January, all elements of the RCT were landed, and the simulated attack was continued throughout the day, under higher echelon control. Reembarkation was effected the following morning, that afternoon being devoted to critique.

On 17 January, ship-to-shore exercises included rehearsal of the plan for naval gunfire support. During the scheduled fire phase, exercises similar to those of 13 January were conducted, with assigned ships firing on simulated targets in accordance with the schedule of fires. At the close of this phase, NGF FO and liaison personnel, and observers from BLT headquarters, landed and participated in call-fire exercises which continued until 18 January. Other elements of the RCT reembarked on 17 January, and ships proceeded to Pearl Harbor, the NGF personnel rejoining their units there on the 18th.

Shore Party exercises during the rehearsal were emphasized. On 13 and 14 January, activities were limited beach organization, erection of markers, and establishment of communications. On 15 January, sufficient cargo was landed to ensure a full shore party play.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SECTION II

MOVEMENT TO OBJECTIVE

1. REHABILITATION PERIOD:

Subsequent to the conclusion of the Hawaiian Area Rehearsal on the 18th of January, and prior to the sailing of the LST-LSM convoy on the 22d, and of the APA-AGA convoy on the 27th, a short period was available for rehabilitation. During this period last minute equipping was accomplished, final orders were issued and briefing of unit commanders was completed.

Such previously unobtainable supplies and equipment as had become available were procured at Pearl Harbor by personnel present there during the rehearsal period. Little additional equipment had been lost or damaged, so that, by the time of sailing, all units had been well and completely equipped.

Concurrent with the completion of the last orders on the 19th, a conference with BLT and Company Commanders was conducted by the RCT Comdr. The latest intelligence photos and other data were issued and studied, and the plan for the operation was carefully reviewed. During the next two days, BLT and Company Commanders conducted intensive briefing of Commanding officers of troops aboard the LST's and LSM's.

During this period, as well as during the period at Pearl Harbor prior to the rehearsal, 50% of embarked personnel were permitted liberty daily, and the bulk of the remainder were sent ashore for supervised recreational activities. Weapons inspections and physical drill for all hands were conducted daily.

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2. SHIPBOARD TRAINING:

Shipboard training during the period embarked prior to this operation was divided into three phases:

1st: During the period 1-10 January, after embarkation on APAs and prior to Hawaiian area rehearsal;

2nd: During the period 18-26 January, subsequent to Hawaiian area rehearsal and prior to clearing Hawaiian area; and

3d: Subsequent to clearing Hawaiian area.

Throughout the entire period aboard ship, particular attention was given to physical exercises and to the care and maintenance of weapons and equipment. One-half hour exercise for all hands daily, and a daily inspection of weapons, were required. Routine shipboard drills were continuous.

During the first phases, emphasis was placed upon indoctrination of personnel into the rehearsal plan, including debarkation exercises for the landings and for personnel transfers. Instruction on capabilities and limitations of supporting arms, Jap weapons, grenades, mines and booby traps, and ship regulations and emergency drills was conducted.

During the second phase, pertinent subjects were reviewed, and added subjects of instruction were field sanitation, casualty evacuation, care and handling of own and enemy dead, and recognition of own and enemy planes, ships and tanks.

During the third phase, particular attention was paid to thorough indoctrination of all officers and enlisted personnel into the operation plan, with emphasis on the role of the individual concerned. Such instruction was initiated with a general study of the theatre of operations, and was followed by a detailed terrain study of the target and all phases of the operation plan, including the operation plans of adjacent units. Previously assigned subjects were reviewed; some of the additional subjects

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covered were the use of LVT ladders and wall scaling methods, attack of a fortified position, defense against chemical attack, camouflage, and initial defense plan. Ship Platoons received thorough indoctrination on the importance of their part in the operation, and were carefully instructed in the unloading plan, including minute inspections of the stowage of holds.

Instruction as indicated for the third phase continued until Dog-day.

3. FORWARD AREA REHEARSAL:

On 18 January, the RCT issued a warning order for the forward area rehearsal. This order, based on the TF 53 order for the rehearsal, contained most of the data required by lower echelons for planning.

On 22 January, the Division order for the forward area rehearsal was received, and the RCT order was issued on 26 January units in LST-LSM convoy not receiving it until 11 February, at Saipan.

As originally planned, rehearsal exercises were to be conducted on the 12th and 13th of February, executing debarkation and approach to the beach under cover of a simulated NGF and air bombardment, in conformity with Preferred Plan for the landing on Iwo Jima. The Preferred Plan was modified in that landings were to be simulated (landing craft approaching to within 300 yards of the beach) and in that no heavy equipment was to be boated. All units of the RCT were to participate except those scheduled for second and subsequent trips of boats, these elements to conduct debarkation drills only. The Primary Plan for the rehearsal called for these exercises to be conducted off the West coast of Tinian. If the weather did not permit this, the exercises were to be conducted off the Southeast coast of Saipan. Rough weather necessitated cancellation of the exercises on the 12th, but on the 13th exercises were carried out according to plan, off Tinian.

On 11 February, in preparation for rehearsal exercises,

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the transfers of personnel necessary to execute the plan for embarkation from Saipan to Iwo Jima were effected. In addition, NGF personnel (FO and liaison parties) were put ashore on Tinian, in order to conduct a non-firing rehearsal of the D-day bombardment plan.

Exercises carried out on the 13th proceeded according to plan, and were well executed. Some delay in arrival of the reserve BLT on station behind the LD was caused due to tardiness of boats returning from debarkation exercises with Corps troops. These pre-King-Hour Corps troop exercises required the dispatching of many of TransDiv 45's boats to ships embarking Corps troops. Such exercises were not timely; superimposing them at so late a date disrupted planned boat allocation, and led to delay of the reserve BLT, as above indicated.

Shortly after dispatch of the leading waves from the LD, an order was received from higher echelon to reembark LVTs off Gurguan Point, some miles from the LSTs' initial position behind the LD, where it had been planned to effect the reembarkation. Although it is concurred in that this step was advisable in order to avoid the damage certain to result from reembarking LVTs in the rough sea offshore from the LD, it is believed that much confusion could have been avoided by earlier issue of the necessary orders.

Except for these difficulties, neither of which seriously affected execution of the landing schedule, the rehearsal was well carried out, and was of distinct benefit. No radical departures from the landing plan (discussed in detail in Section III) were necessary.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SECTION III

SHIP TO SHORE MOVEMENT

1. NATURE OF BEACH AND TERRAIN INLAND.

Intelligence studies of Iwo Jima indicated and experience ashore confirmed that, within the RCT zone, the following underwater, beach and inland terrain conditions existed:

(a) The approaches to the Yellow Beaches were deep and unobstructed, with no obstacles to the approach of any type of landing ship or craft.

(b) Beaches Yellow 1 (on RCT left) and Yellow 2 (on RCT right) were of loose volcanic sand, rising on 5% to 7% slope from the water's edge. They were bounded on the landward side by the first of a series of steep wave-cut terraces, between 10 and 25 yards inland from the water's edge, depending on the tide.

(c) The first terrace was of a 50 to 60 degree slope, varying in height from 3 to 12 feet. Except for narrow areas on the left and center of Yellow One, and on the left of Yellow Two, this terrace proved to be an effective obstacle to the passage of vehicles.

(d) From the first terrace inland to Airfield No 1, varying between 550 and 750 yards from the water's edge, the terrain continued to be of loose volcanic sand, rising on a moderate gradient, and crossed laterally with a succession of two to five sand terraces which were progressively less distinct and more broken.

(e) Immediately beyond the NE-SW runway on Airfield No 1, in the center and right of the RCT zone, rose a steep sandy ridge.

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One thousand yards further to the north, the embankment of the second airfield, constructed along the central ridge of the island, rose sharply, reaching an elevation of more than 300 feet. In the center of the RCT zone, the central ridge of the island continued toward Airfield No 1, paralleling the N-S runway of the field, and dropping down to join the first ridge. In the right of the RCT zone, the ground forward of the first ridge rose gradually to the base of the embankment of Airfield No 2, thence rising sharply to form an amphitheater. In the left of the RCT zone, the ground fell away rapidly from the central ridge to the more level ground below.

2. THE TACTICAL PLAN

The objectives, boundaries, and zone of action of RCT 23, and of its BLTs, are shown in Appendix 1 to Section IV, this report. The mission of RCT 23, as promulgated in 4th Mar Div Opn Plan 49-44 was:

"RCT 23, at How-hour on Dog-day, land on Beaches YELLOW 1 and YELLOW 2, and, with its main effort on the right, seize that part of Airfield No 1 within Z; then, seize that part of Airfield No 2 and the remainder of O-1 within Z, prepared for further Opns to complete the capture of IWO JIMA. Maintain contact with RCT 25 and protect the Div left flank."

The tactical plan, in execution of this mission, was to land with two BLTs abreast (BLT 1 and BLT 2, BLT 2 on the right), attack inland and, executing a turning movement to the right, seize in succession objectives O-a, O-b, and O-1. The RCT Reserve (BLT 3), was to remain afloat initially, prepared to land on order on either of the Yellow beaches and support the attack as directed. It was to be landed at the earliest practicable moment. If not committed to the attack immediately upon landing, it was to be retained in RCT reserve in a position from which it could effectively support the attack either by securing the RCT left flank, or by passing through one of the initial assault BLTs on order of the RCT Commander. Except for the 17 LVT(A)s of Co B, 2d Armd Amph Trac Bn, which formed the leading wave of the RCT, and were to pass to the assault BLTs on land-

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ing, all elements of the RCT Support Group were to remain initially afloat, prepared to land and support the attack on order.

Selected as the initial RCT objective, Objective O-a was 1200 yards inland in the direction of attack. On the right of the RCT zone, this objective included the low sandy ridge beyond Airfield No 1; on the left, it approximated the initial objective selected by RCT 27, crossing the airfield in the area least exposed to hostile fire. This objective served primarily as a control line, and in the absence of orders to the contrary, the assault BLTs were to continue to the objective O-b. O-b included all of Airfield No 1, and the first favorable ground beyond it. It was 600 yards beyond the O-a line on the left of the RCT zone, but coincided with the O-a on the right. It was selected so as to provide a suitable intermediate objective for reorganization, and also constituted a means of coordinating the advance of the RCT as it executed its turning movement toward the center of the island. 1100 yards further was Objective O-1, generally astride of Airfield No 2.

3. THE LANDING SCHEDULE

Dictated by the scheme of maneuver, the fundamental concept of the landing schedule was to achieve the rapid landing of all elements of the RCT. Countering achievement of this end was the known difficult nature of the beach and of the terrain immediately inland, and the stiff resistance expected. The landing schedule called for landing, in 5 scheduled waves of LVTs, all elements of the assault BLTs except the tanks, the shore party (less its reconnaissance detachments) and an alternate command echelon of each assault BLT. These elements were on call. The reserve BLT was to be prepared to cross the line of departure at How plus thirty minutes. The principal tactical elements of the RCT Support Group were to rendezvous afloat at How-hour, prepared to land on order.

In detail, the two assault BLTs were to land as follows:

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BEACH YELLOW ONE		BEACH YELLOW TWO	
Wave	BLT 1	Time of Landing	BLT 2
	8 LVT(A)s		9 LVT(A)s
1. Det Co B 2d Armd Amph Bn	7 LVT(2)s	H-hour	7 LVT(2)s
	7 LVT(2)s		7 LVT(2)s
2. Asslt Plats	Asslt Plats		Asslt Plats
Co B	Co A	H + 2	Co E
	4 LVT(2)s		4 LVT(2)s
	2 LVT(4)s		2 LVT(4)s
3. Spt Plats	Spt Plats		Spt Plats
Co B	Co A	H + 7	Co E
			Co F
4.	NO 4TH WAVE YELLOW BEACHES		
	11 LVT(4)s		11 LVT(4)s
	1 LVT(2)		1 LVT(2)
5. Co G (BLT Res) and Engr			Co G (BLT Res) and Engr
Plat		H + 17	Plat
	6 LVT(4)s		5 LVT(4)s
6.			1 LVT(2)
	BLT Hq	H + 22	BLT Hq
	LSM 211		LSMs 126 & 216
7. 4th Plat and Det Hq Tk		On Call	2d and 3d Plats; 1st Plat
Sec, Co C, 4th Tk Bn			and Det Hq Tk Sec, Co C,
			4th Tk Bn
	12 LCVPs		12 LCVPs
8.	2 LCMs		2 LCMs
	37mm Plat, Spt Gp. SP	On Call	37mm Plat, Spt Gp. SP
On	LSM 206		LSM 202
Call Elms BLT SP and Equip-	On Call Elms BLT SP and Equipment		
ment			
	FREE	Free	FREE
	2 LCVPs	Boats	2 LCVPs
	2 LVT(4)s	(Alternate	2 LVT(4)s
	1 LVT(2)	BLT OP's)	1 LVT(2)

BLT 3, in RCT reserve, was to boat in LCV(P)s and LCMs, rendezvous behind the LST area at How-hour, and then assemble in a designated area behind the LD by How plus thirty minutes prepared,

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on order, to land on Yellow 1 or Yellow 2, and support the attack. For the landing, BLT 3 was organized into six waves, waves to land at 5 minute intervals.

Of the RCT Support Group, Regimental Weapons Company (less its 3 37mm platoons) and the RCT Command echelon, were to be assembled afloat at How-hour. The 2d Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment which could not be initially boated owing to an insufficiency of LCMs, was to boat in the first LCMs to return, and it was expected to be at the LD by How plus 2 1/2 hours. Other elements of the RCT Support Group were to boat and land on order.

4. THE CONTROL PLAN

In order to ensure the most effective coordination and control of the landing, close liaison was established with the Comdr Trans Div 45 upon embarkation, and this liaison was maintained throughout the planning and execution of the landing. The excellent cooperation prevailing throughout ensured that confusion during the landing would be held to a minimum. Whenever practicable, the RCT and BLT Comdrs participated in the indoctrination of boat group and wave guide officers. This indoctrination would have been even more effective if - as is strongly recommended for subsequent operations - all boat group and wave guide officers had, in all cases, been embarked during the movement to the objective aboard the same ship as the BLT Comdr with whom they were to operate.

During the landing, liaison was ensured by establishing both the Transdiv Control Officer and the RCT Comdr aboard the Yellow Control Vessel, the PC 578. Owing to the limited space aboard this vessel, the RCT command group aboard was limited to the Commanding Officer, minimum essential staff, liaison and communications personnel. The remainder of this command group remained alongside the PC in 2 LCV(P)s where they were readily available. In order to ensure continuity of command, and the early establishment of the RCT CP ashore, an alternate command group under the RCT Executive Officer was maintained in an assembly area to the rear of LD. In the event of incapacitation or

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destruction of the primary command group aboard the PC, this alternate group, which had been embarked in APA 154 at the last staging area, was prepared to take over at once; it was further prepared to land and establish the RCT CP ashore, as soon as conditions permitted.

All scheduled waves of the RCT were dispatched from the LD under the direct supervision of the TransDiv Control Officer in coordination with the RCT Comdr. For the first two waves, the signal for dispatching originated from the Central Control Vessel, by radio and by flag, and was relayed to the waves by flag signal from the Yellow Control Vessel. Subsequent scheduled waves were dispatched by flag signal by Yellow Control, acting independently. "On Call" waves were similarly dispatched, when ordered by the RCT Comdr.

Enroute to the beach, the speed and course of the waves were directly controlled by the boat group commanders and the wave guide officers. The leading wave of each BLT was preceded by an LCP(L) in which the boat group commander and a representative of the BLT Comdr were embarked. This wave was followed by an LCV(P) with officer personnel embarked, prepared to replace the boat group commander's LCP(L) or to clear from the path of succeeding waves any disabled LVT(A)s, and, if necessary, rescue the personnel therein. Subsequent waves of the BLT were similarly preceded by LCV(P)s with a naval wave guide officer aboard, and followed by a second LCV(P) to take aboard and land embarked personnel of any LVT casualty.

The juxtaposition of the RCT Comdr and the Transdiv Control Officer aboard the Control Vessel ensured effective control throughout the ship to shore movement. Via organic communications, the RCT Comdr had direct radio contact with higher and adjacent echelons, and with all major elements of the RCT, while naval channels provided communications with Comdr Transdiv 45 (paralleled by RCT radio to the RCT rear echelon aboard the APA 196), with the boat group commanders, and with the wave guide officers.

The LD, 4000 yards offshore, was marked by the Yellow Control Vessel, which took station on the center of the LD for Yellow

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Beaches, astride the boundary between Yellow 1 and Yellow 2. For ready identification, this vessel flew a large Yellow flag, and was further marked by a large yellow panel fixed to its stern. On each flank, 500 yards from and abreast of the Control Vessel, an SC took station, delineating the line and the boundaries of the LD. The LD for Blue Beaches (abreast on the right), and for Red Beaches (abreast on the left) were similarly marked by PC's and SC's flying flags of a color corresponding to their beaches.

Small craft approaching the LD from astern were aided in locating the Yellow Control Vessel by the location of the Trans Gp Baker (4th Mar Div) Control Vessel (PCS 1452), which was approximately 500 yards behind the LD, on a line with the boundary between Yellow and Blue boat lanes, and identified by a large yellow and blue flag. The Central Control Vessel (PCE 877) flew the zero flag, and was initially on station abreast of the Trans Group Baker Control, in line with the boundary between Yellow and Red boat lanes.

LSTs embarking assault personnel took station in the LST area 1500 yards directly to seaward of the LD, and flew flags of colors corresponding to the beach color for which their embarked personnel were scheduled. No marker vessels were on station between the LST Area and the transport area, 9500 yards further to seaward.

Inshore of the LD, boat lanes were marked by direct fire support ships stationed 2500 yards off the beach, a battleship being astride the boundary between Yellow and Red boat lanes, and a destroyer being on the boundary between the Yellow and Blue lanes. In order to further mark the Yellow boat lanes for subsequent waves, the boat group commanders' LCP(L)s were, after leading in the first wave, to take station 500 yards offshore and in the center of their respective boat lanes. Although this last means of identifying the boat lanes had not initially been planned, it was effected upon the recommendation of the RCT Comdr, and it is strongly recommended that this practice be continued. Even greater benefit would be obtained by the employment of LCC's for this purpose.

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5. THE LANDING

Dog-day had been tentatively set for 19 February, and How-hour for 0900. Both were confirmed. Throughout the day, the weather, sea conditions and visibility were excellent.

At 0640, the transports arrived in the transport area. The RCT Comdr and his command group were afloat immediately thereafter, and cleared for the Control Vessel at 0700, arriving thereat at 0745. By 0735 all LSTs were on station, and by 0805, all LVTs had been launched without mishap, and the waves were forming behind the LD. Although delayed in debarkation, BLT 3 reported at 0830 that it would make the schedule, all boats except one then being in the water. At 0840, BLT 3 confirmed completion of its boating.

At 0830, the first wave (LVT(A)s) was dispatched from the LD, one LVT(A) being inoperative. The second, third, fifth and sixth (LVTs) were dispatched on schedule, at 0832, 0837, 0847, and 0852. By 0900, the seventh (tank LSMs) and eighth (BLT shore party personnel and equipment) waves were on station behind the LD, prepared to land. Both Regimental Weapons Company (less 37mm platoons), and the remainder of the RCT Command echelon, which had been delayed in boating were enroute to their rendezvous areas at 0900.

Enroute to the beach, the landing craft received no fire, and at 0902 the first wave (LVT(A)s) landed. One minute later the 2d wave of BLT 1 landed, and at 0905 the 2d wave of BLT 2 landed. The remaining scheduled waves followed at the prescribed intervals.

Reports during the first half-hour after landing indicated that both BLTs were progressing inland under increasing mortar and machine-gun fire, and were beginning to encounter pillboxes within their zones. No mines were reported on the beaches. Reports on tank landing points were somewhat confused and misleading. It appeared clear that tanks could successfully land and move inland in the center of Yellow 1, but reports as to the condition of Yellow 2 proved inaccurate.

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Shortly after 0900, the CO BLT 1 requested that his attached tanks be landed, and, as the need for tanks ashore was becoming increasingly apparent, it was decided to land LSM 211 on the center of Yellow 1. Owing to the fact that the Control Vessel had no direct radio communications with the LSMs, some delay was encountered in getting the LSM to the LD. During this interval, CO BLT 2 requested the landing of his tanks, and at 0930, all three tank LSMs were dispatched from the LD, LSM 211 to land as indicated, on the center of Yellow Beach 1, LSM 126 to land 50 yards to the north of the beached lugger on the boundary of Yellow 1 and Yellow 2, and LSM 216 to land 100 yards farther to the north, near the center of Yellow 2.

At 0940, all LSMs hit the beach, and were immediately taken under fire. The 211 had landed in its correct position, but both the 126 and the 216 were from 100 to 150 yards to the north of the points prescribed. Although hit twice almost immediately, the 211 successfully discharged its tanks and withdrew. These tanks (the 4th Platoon, and a detachment of the Co Hq Tank Section, attached to BLT 1) started inland from the center of Yellow 1. The tanks on the 126 (the 2d Platoon, attached to BLT 1, and the 3d Platoon, attached to BLT 2) were landed, but within a few minutes, three had either bogged down or had been disabled by mines. The remaining three were reorganized as the 3d Platoon, and this platoon set out for the BLT 1 zone, which it finally reached. The tanks on the 216 (the 1st Platoon and a detachment of Co Hq Tank Section, attached to BLT 2) had even greater difficulty. One tank was discharged, but it bogged down at the mouth of the ramp. After a half-hour's effort to recover this tank, the 216 withdrew to the LD. At 1100, another attempt to land was made, this time on Yellow 1, but no tanks succeeded in getting ashore. Repeatedly hit, the 216 again withdrew, and proceeded to the hospital LST (LST 930) behind the LD to discharge its casualties. After repeated orders to attempt to discharge his tanks on the center of Yellow Beach 1, the Commanding Officer of LSM 216 cast away from the Hospital LST and at 1245, proceeded to Yellow 1. By 1300, the remaining vehicles were discharged. These tanks proceeded inland, but were unable to locate a route to the zone of BLT 2. No such route was located that day. Tank operations were therefore

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RCT 2nd OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

limited to the zone of BLT 1, and, because of the hazards indicated, were difficult and relatively ineffective. On request of the RCT Comdr two tank retrievers were landed in an endeavor to assist the assault tanks which were in trouble along the beach. Some progress was made, but the nature of the terrain and the heavy mortar and artillery fire from the flanks constituted a distinct handicap to retrieving operations.

In the meantime, the assault BLTs were meeting increasingly heavy resistance. At 0930 BLT 1 reported its forward elements 250 yards inland, and continuing slowly; ten minutes later, BLT 2 reported similar progress, but that its leading elements were pinned down by machine-gun fire from pillboxes to its front and flanks. At 0932, the eight wave of BLT 1 was dispatched to the beach. At the same time, the 37mm platoon of BLT 2 was dispatched, the shore party elements of BLT 2's eight wave remaining afloat. At 1034, BLT 1 confirmed that the entire BLT had landed.

By 1200, BLT 1 was within 200 yards of Airfield No 1. BLT 2, continuing to meet intensive resistance, was about 100 yards less advanced than BLT 1, it having made very little progress since its previous report. Enemy fire continued, with the beach areas receiving frequent and concentrated shellings from heavy mortars and artillery.

At 1300, BLT 3 was ordered to land on Yellow 1, to assemble vicinity Target Areas 148 J 149 A, and to support the attack of BLT 2 with its 81mm mortars. At 1313, its first wave was dispatched from the LD, landing at 1332. The last wave was dispatched at 1338, and had landed by 1358. Shortly after 1400, the shore party elements of BLT 2 were dispatched from the LD, and by 1430, BLT 2 was completely ashore.

At 1405, the left company of BLT 1, accompanied by tanks, had reached the airfield, but the tanks were forced to withdraw behind the revetment because of heavy anti-tank fire. Thirty minutes later, in order to get BLT 3 clear of the beach area, BLT 3 was ordered to pass through BLT 1 and continue the attack, BLT 1 to assemble immediately in rear of the positions then held.

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At this time it was recommended to the Division Comdr that one BLT of RCT 24 be made available on Yellow Beach 2 to support BLT 2 on request. Shortly afterward, favorable action on this request was initiated by Division.

As it became increasingly apparent that the inland advance was not progressing as satisfactorily as had been anticipated, the RCT Comdr, shortly after 1500, decided to establish the RCT CP ashore, and at 1620, an advance CP was established ashore in Target Area 164 Y, South.

Shortly after 1600, an attempt was made to land tank reinforcements from Co B, 4th Tk Bn, but only one tank landed successfully, and the LSM carrying them withdrew. At this time, RCT 23 had six tanks in operation. At 1605, the first waves of direct support artillery, the 2d Bn, 14th Marines, were dispatched to the beach. The RCT Shore Party Headquarters (133d NC Battalion, less detachments) landed immediately thereafter, accompanied by the 3d Platoon, 4th MP Co.

At 1622, the first wave of BLT 2/24 crossed the LD for Beach Yellow 2. On landing, BLT 2/24 was attached to this RCT, but not to be committed to the assault. At 1655, with authority of the Division Commander for commitment, it was ordered to pass through BLT 2/23 and seize the edge of the Airfield. The passage of lines in this instance was postponed until just prior to darkness, however, due to the initiation of an advance by BLT 2/23 to the airfield. By 1700, BLT 3 had passed through BLT 1 and completed seizure of the edge of the Airfield, and BLT 2/23 was nearly abreast, but still 100 yards short of the edge of the airfield in its zone of action. Shortly after, the order was issued to consolidate for the night on the edge of the airfield, and by 1800, BLT 2/23 completed seizing the edge of the airfield within its zone. Relief by BLT 2/24 was initiated, and at 1915 it was announced completed.

Having dispatched all elements of 2/24, the RCT Comdr and command echelon left the Control Vessel and reached the CP at 1820.

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ROT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

Nightfall found RCT 23, with BLT 3 and BLT 2/24 in the line, firmly established along the seaward edge of Airfield No 1. A gap existed between the two BLTs, created by a small pocket of entrenched Japs on the edge of the turntable in Target Area 165 K P, but the pocket was contained and the gap entirely covered by fire.

Heavy casualties had been sustained by the assault BLTs during the day, but these BLTs had now been relieved by two BLTs at full strength, and were in reserve positions to the rear of the relieving BLTs. Thirteen tanks (including the one tank from Company B) were operative, but two of these were flame throwers which, with their fuel exhausted and without resupply, were of no value in the attack. All were located just behind the embankment of the airfield at Target Area 164 X. The direct support artillery battalion (the 2d Bn, 14th Marines, 105mm howitzers) had 10 guns in position ashore and registered by 2130. The supply situation, especially ammunition, was far from satisfactory. The regularly assigned Shore and Beach Parties had been so disrupted and disorganized by enemy fire as to render them practically ineffective. The Regimental Quartermaster assumed control of Yellow Beach 1, and initiated its operation to a sufficient extent to provide relatively adequate evacuation and supply to meet the immediate needs of the Combat Team. Yellow Beach 2 was operating at extremely low efficiency due to its almost untenable condition as the result of enemy fires.

In preparation for the next day, the order was issued at 1905 to continue the attack in the same formation, same zones, at 0830 on the 20th, BLTs 1 and 2, in RCT reserve, to remain in their presently assigned assembly areas, prepared to support the attack on order.

Many elements of the RCT Support Group were not ashore on the night of Dog-day, principally because of the difficulty in landing wheeled equipment. Dates of landing were as tabulated below:

D plus 1 (20Feb) Regimental Weapons Co (less 37mm Platoons)

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- D plus 2 (21Feb) 2d Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment.
3d Platoon, 4th Service and Supply Co, 4th
Service Bn.
3d Section, 7th Marine War Dog Platoon.
Co C, 4th Medical Bn (less Collecting
Section)
- D plus 3 (22Feb) Co C, 4th Motor Transport Battalion.
- D plus 5 (24Feb) 24th Replacement Draft. (Landed as combat
to replacements on Division Order).
- D plus 9 (1Mar)
- D plus 8 (28Feb) 3d Platoon, 442d Army Port Co. (Landed on
completion of unloading of AKA 60).

Despite the many difficulties encountered, and the unusually heavy resistance, the landing attack was executed in accordance with plan. The advance inland, although limited, gave RCT 23 control of the high ground along the seaward edge of the airfield, with excellent fields of fire for automatic weapons. Eleven tanks were available for anti-mechanized defense of the beachhead, direct support artillery was in position and the Combat Team was ready to continue the attack. With two fresh BLT's occupying the front line and the two initial assault BLT's disposed in depth as a regimental reserve, the threat of counter-attack in the RCT zone of action created relatively little concern.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SECTION IV

NARRATIVE OF THE OPERATION

DOG-DAY, 19 FEBRUARY, 1945

All operations for Dog-day have been included in Section III, Paragraph 5, THE LANDING, this report.

DOG PLUS ONE, 20 FEBRUARY, 1945

During the night intensive shelling from light and heavy caliber weapons was received through the RCT zone. At King-Hour, 0830, RCT 23 continued the attack. The attack was preceded by a fifteen minute artillery, naval gunfire and air preparation, from King minus fifteen minutes to King-Hour. At King-Hour, artillery lifted four hundred yards and fired a five minute concentration; thereafter fires were on call. The 2d Bn, 14th Mar, was in direct support of RCT 23; elements of Co C, 4th Tk Bn, were assigned to the assault BLTs on the basis of one reinforced platoon per assault unit. The formation for the attack: BLT 3/23 and ELT 2/24 abreast, 2/24 on the right; BLTs 1/23 and 2/23 remained in reserve prepared to support the attack as ordered. The boundaries for the attack remained the same, with no change in the assigned objective, O-1. The initial resistance encountered consisted of intense machine gun, mortar and artillery fire. At 0940, both assault units had reached O-a against heavy resistance and were continuing the attack. Contact with RCT 25 on the right was temporarily broken at this time. By 1200, the northern limits of Airfield No 1 had been secured. During the advance a portion of the enemy defensive position in depth was breached and a series of well concealed pillboxes and infantry strong points reduced. The attack continued throughout the remainder of the day, but little progress was made in the face of constant mortar, rocket and artillery

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fire. At 1630, in preparation for securing for the night, BLTs 1/23 and 2/23 displaced forward, and established the Regimental Reserve Line along the seaward edge of Airfield No 1. Solidly tied in together, and with units on the RCT flanks, they formed a strong secure secondary line of defense. Contact was established with RCT 27 on the left and regained with RCT 25 on the right, and, at approximately 1800, positions were consolidated in preparation for night defense. The days advance approximated 500 yards against heavy resistance from well concealed pillboxes and gun positions supported by mortar, artillery and rocket fire. The employment of tanks in support was minimized due to limitations of the terrain and to mines. The RCT CP remained at 164 Y, South.

DOG PLUS TWO, 21 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 2310, BLT 3/23 reported three enemy tanks on the airstrip to its front; an artillery concentration called on this target immediately resulted in the verified destruction of one tank. The remaining two were driven off, and were not again observed. Other enemy activity during the previous night was limited mainly to intense and accurate artillery, mortar, and rocket fire in the RCT zone. No actual physical contact with the enemy was reported. At 0045, the division warning order for the continuation of the attack on the morning of 21 February was received, and a warning order was issued to all major units of the RCT. At about 0445, RCT Operation Order Number 2-45 (dispatch) was issued to all major units of the RCT. King-Hour was set at 0810, with a coordinated artillery and naval gunfire preparation from King minus twenty to King plus twenty. 2/14 remained in direct support of RCT 23. Air was on call at King-Hour with a pre-arranged air strike at selected targets from King plus twenty to King plus forty. The formation of units remained the same with no change in boundaries except for extension to the northward. The LD, the front lines at King-Hour; the objective, O-2. One platoon of tanks from Co C, and one section of 75mm Halftracks from R/W Co were attached to the assault BLTs for the attack. At 0810, the leading units continued the attack, but forward movement was slow. Increasing resistance was encountered along the entire RCT front from mortar

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and artillery concentrations directed at the advancing troops. In addition, the volume and accuracy of fire from concealed machine guns and pillboxes in the RCT zone made the advance slow and difficult. Mines were located in front of BLT 2/24 at TA 165 B. Engineers were dispatched to the area, but difficulty was experienced in the removal of the mines due to the volume of mortar fire concentrated on the approaches to the mine field, and the accurate automatic weapons fire from pillboxes covering the mined area. The total advance for RCT 23 during the day averaged about one hundred yards along the entire front. By 1745, the order from division was received to consolidate for the night on the most favorable ground. Due to the number of casualties in the assault elements during the day, one company from 1/23 was attached to 3/23, and one company from 2/23 was attached to 2/24, to reinforce the lines for night defense. Contact with adjacent units during the day had been lost; however, prior to darkness solid contact was established with RCT 25 on the right and RCT 27 on the left. Except for the detached companies, BLTs 1/23 and 2/23 remained on the Regimental Reserve Line along the seaward edge of the airfield throughout the day, and established a secure secondary defense, with contact with adjacent unit reserves, on this line for the night. During the day some question was expressed over the proper location of the division left boundary, as a result of the troops of RCT 27 being reported within RCT 23 zone. The point of contact with RCT 27 was at 181 O, SW corner, in BLT 1/23's zone, approximately two hundred yards inside the 4th MarDiv left boundary. This adjustment of the boundary between the adjacent RCTs was dictated by the actual location of critical terrain features on the ground. The operation of tanks in support of the infantry during the day was again limited by the terrain and recurring mine fields in the zone of action. For the most part during the attack, the tanks were maintained at the rear under BLT control and were called forward when they could be employed. The mere appearance of a tank forward with the infantry during the attack resulted in heavy artillery and mortar fire being directed at the vehicles and consequently into the lines of the advancing infantry, causing heavy casualties. For this same reason, the further, because of their extreme vulnerability to the heavy fire, the employment of 75mm Halftracks was impracticable, and these vehicles returned to parent con-

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trol. During the latter part of the afternoon the RCT 23 CP displaced forward to a more favorable covered position at 164 Y, Northwest corner.

DOG PLUS THREE, 22 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The main activity during the previous night consisted of breaking up a counterattack of an estimated two hundred Japs in front of BLT 3/23 at 2330, principally by artillery fire. Thereafter, repeated attempts at infiltration were repulsed. Sporadic but concentrated enemy artillery and mortar fire persisted during the hours of darkness but was somewhat reduced in volume in comparison with previous periods. Upon receipt of a Division Warning Order, and later, at 0155, of Division Operation Order Number 3-45, the necessary plans and arrangements for the relief of RCT 23 by RCT 21 were made with the officers of that unit. The RCT 23 CP at 164 Y, NW corner, was organized as a joint CP operated by the two organizations. Elements of Co C, 4th Tk Bn, passed to control of RCT 21; 2/14 was assigned as direct support artillery. The necessary guides from RCT 23 were furnished to expedite the relief prior to 0730. Progress of the relief was slow due to heavy mortar and machine gun fire, and the complete relief of all elements of RCT 23 was not effected until approximately 1130, at which time BLT 2/24 was detached, reverting to control of RCT 24 at 1200. RCT 23, when relieved, passed to VAC Reserve and assembled in TAs 164 EY, 165 AFUQLGH, and closed this area prior 1300. A reconnaissance of routes of approach to the zones of the 4th and 5th Mar Divs was made during the day in preparation for possible commitment in these areas. Elements of the RCT reorganized and partially reequipped from materiel salvaged in the rear areas. The RCT CP remained at 164 Y, NW, and intermittent shelling of this and other portions of the RCT area continued throughout the day.

DOG PLUS FOUR, 23 FEBRUARY, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was limited to sporadic shelling of the RCT assembly area by mortars, rockets and artillery, with some rounds of heavy dual-purpose AA and 20mm airbursts. The repeated shelling produced few casualties, but the demoralizing effect on the troops was considerable at the time. The entire RCT

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remained in VAC Reserve during the night with no change in the disposition of troops. At 0019, Division Operation Order 4-45 was received. RCT Operation Order 3-45 was issued at 0510. All units remained in assigned assembly areas during the day, and active reconnaissance of routes of approach to the zones of the 4th and 5th Mar Divs was completed by members of the RCT and BLT staffs. At 1000, on request of 4th Mar Div, BLT 3/23 was moved to a new assembly area in the vicinity of TA 148 HI, and it closed in the new area by 1310, VAC being notified. Remaining elements of the RCT maintained their present positions, BLT 1 at TA 164 Y 165 PU, and BLT 2 at 165 QLGH. Reorganization, and reequipping of personnel from materiel salvaged in the rear area continued. Prior to 1400, the RCT CP displaced to a new location at 164 Y, south central portion, and turned over its old location at 164 Y, NW, to the 4th Mar Div. Inclement weather prevailed throughout the day with rain and fog obscuring visibility and making general conditions uncomfortable for the troops. Enemy artillery and mortars continued to be active during the day with repeated shelling of beach installations and the rear areas. At approximately 1930, units were alerted to condition red and shortly thereafter enemy planes appeared over the area. The subsequent bombing was ineffective. Division Operation Order 5-45 was received at about 2345, and RCT Operation Order 4-45 was issued at 0140 to all units of the RCT.

DOG PLUS FIVE, 24 FEBRUARY, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was confined to frequent shelling of RCT assembly area with mortars, artillery and rockets. Repeated efforts were made by all echelons of the command to locate the source of this enemy fire, and shell reports of the possible location of enemy guns were forwarded to Division. The immediate effect of the counterbattery fire was evidenced in the fact that enemy fire was reduced when certain target area locations were fired. The RCT remained in VAC Reserve throughout the entire day with no change in the disposition of troops. BLT 2/23 executed mopping up operations of Airfield No 1, and the revetments adjacent thereto. Mines and duds were marked and locations reported to Division. During the mopping-up of this area no contacts with the enemy were reported. At 1130, on 4th Div, BLT 3/23, was

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alerted to be prepared to move on fifteen minutes notice to the zones of RCT 21 or RCT 24. The 1st 37mm AT Platoon, R/W Co, and the 3d Plat, Co C, 4th Tk Bn, were attached to BLT 3/23 in the event it was moved for possible commitment in either zone designated. At 1530, on Division order, 3/23 moved to a new assembly area vicinity TA 182 UP, and was attached to RCT 21 as reserve for the night. During the day 11 officers and 473 EM from the 24th Replacement Draft were landed from the APAs and proportionately assigned to the BLTs to replace casualties suffered to date in the operation. There was no change in the location of the RCT CP during the day.

DOG PLUS SIX, 25 FEBRUARY, 1945

During the preceding night, sporadic mortar, rocket, and artillery fire fell in the RCT area. At 2130, the RCT commander and operations officer attended a conference at the Division CP, and received a warning order for continuation of the attack. Immediately upon return of the RCT commander to the RCT CP, at about 2230, a conference was conducted with the BLT commanders and officers of the supporting and attached arms. King-hour was designated as 0930, 25 February, with O-2 assigned as the objective for the attack. The plan for the attack was for RCT 23, in column of battalions, BLT 3/23 in assault, 1/23 following at 600 yards in support, and 2/23 in RCT reserve, to pass through the left element of RCT 24 at King-hour, and seize O-2. BLT 3/23 reverted to parent control at 0530, and RCT 23 passed to 4th Mar Div control at 0630.

Artillery preparation for the attack consisted of fires from Corps and Division artillery, from King minus forty-five to King-Hour. At 0830, the advance echelon of the RCT CP displaced forward and the new CP was established in the vicinity of 182 Y, SE corner. Throughout the remainder of the Iwo Jima operation, the RCT CP remained at this location. During the scheduled King-Hour artillery preparation, elements of the RCT executed a passage of lines through 2/24, the left unit of RCT 24, and continued the attack at King-hour in column of BLTs with 3/23 leading, followed at six hundred yards by 1/23 in support. 2/23 initially remained in its assigned assembly area as RCT reserve. Initial progress of the attack was

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slow as a result of intense enemy mortar fire and automatic weapons fire from pillboxes and bunkers to the front and flanks in the vicinity of Airfield No 2. In order to expedite the attack, arrangements were made with RCT 9 on the left for the tanks attached to RCT 23 to use a route of approach to Airfield No 2 through RCT 9 zone of action. Using this approach, tanks were able to effectively support the attack by destroying AT guns, pillboxes and well concealed emplacements which had retarded the forward progress of BLT 3/23. However, due to the limitations of the routes, and further, because of heavy and consistently accurate AT and mortar fire from the north, access to Airfield No 2 was denied until late in the afternoon. Substantial gains were netted by the RCT during the attack through the constant pounding and aggressiveness of the infantry and tanks. The Jap defensive bulwark in the vicinity of Airfield No 2 was considerably weakened, and by 1430, a tank bulldozer and engineer equipment had made a satisfactory route leading on to the EW runway of the airfield. At 1545, Co A, BLT 1/23, was alerted to pass through and pinch out Co K, BLT 3/23, which had suffered heavy casualties in the day's operation. Favorable commanding ground was secured in the right of the RCT zone by 1600, and positions were consolidated for the night. Some difficulty was experienced in establishing contact with RCT 9 on the left because of the necessity of stretching across the open area of the airfield which was effectively neutralized by enemy mortars. At 1640, R6T Warning Order (dispatch) was issued to all major units for the continuation of the attack on 26 February, King-hour was designated for 0800, with no change in boundaries or objective. Scheme of maneuver prescribed BLTs 1/23 and 3/23 abreast, 3/23 on the right, with 2/23 in RCT Reserve. There was no change in the location of BLT 2/23, RCT Reserve, or of the RCT CP during the day.

DOG PLUS SEVEN, 26 FEBRUARY, 1945

Intermittent shelling in the RCT zone continued during the night, with periods of intensive and concentrated mortar fire registered on the front line positions, and in the vicinity of Airfield No 2. At 2230, Division Operation Order 7-45 was received, and RCT Operation Order 5-45 was issued prior to 2400. Following the air, naval gunfire and artillery bombardment from King minus

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forty-five to King-hour, RCT 23, with BLTs 1/23 and 3/23 in the assault, 3/23 on the right, and BLT 2/23 in RCT reserve, continued the attack at 0800 against stubborn resistance from well organized mutually supporting pillboxes, bunkers, emplacements and caves supported by concentrated mortar fire. Successive mine fields on the taxiway of Airfield No 2 (zone of BLT 1), and in vicinity of the Radio Weather station at TA 200 W, on extreme left of 3/23's zone, effectively limited the employment of tanks in support of the infantry. Progress was slow, and initially only small gains were made against an intricate defensive network on the high ground to the front in the RCT zone. Direct fire from enemy tanks dug in on the slopes of HILL 382, on the left of the BLT 3/23's zone, and grazing fire from machine guns sighted down the taxiway of the airfield made the advance of the infantry difficult. By late afternoon the southwest slopes of HILL 382 had been gained by the reduction of pillboxes and installations vital to the enemy defense of the area. Net gains of approximately 200 yards were averaged during the day against fierce resistance. Positions gained in the vicinity of HILL 382 became absolutely untenable due to the tremendous volume of enemy mortar and rocket fire concentrated on this area. At 1700, front line units began to consolidate positions and close gaps for firm contact during the night, but due to the volume of enemy mortar and machine gun fire in the area, firm contact between adjacent RCTs was not established until 2100. During the day BLT 2/23, in RCT Reserve, conducted mopping-up operations in the rear area to clean out snipers in the vicinity of the RCT CP. The RCT Reserve and the RCT CP did not displace during the day.

DOG PLUS EIGHT, 27 FEBRUARY, 1945

Enemy opposition during the night was active in the form of mortar fire on the front line positions and in the rear areas. Prior to 2300, Division Operation Order 8-45 was received, and by 0100 RCT Operation Order 6-45 for the continuation of the attack on 27 February had been issued. At 0535, enemy tank and infantry activity was reported along the boundary between the assault BLTs, forward of the lines; artillery was called for in the general area 201 QR and the enemy effort was dispersed. The operation order for the continuation of the attack prescribed King Hour as 0800

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with Corps and Division artillery firing a scheduled preparation from King minus forty-five to King-Hour. 2/14 remained in direct support of RCT 23. NAF provided naval gunfire and air support for the attack. The formation for the attack consisted of BLT 3/23 (with Co G, BLT 2/23, attached) and BLT 1/23 abreast, 3/23 on the right. The objective remained O-2, with no change in boundaries or zone of action for the RCT. The LD was designated as the front lines at King-Hour. BLT 2/23, less Co G, remained in the rear area as RCT Reserve and was directed to conduct mopping-up operations and to maintain anti-sniper patrols in the RCT rear areas. Co B, 4th Tk Bn, attached to the RCT, supported the attack by maintaining one platoon forward for use of the assault BLTs on call. The remainder of the company assembled in the vicinity of the RCT CP prepared to execute missions as assigned. Co C, 4th Engr Bn, and the 2d Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, remained under RCT control prepared to execute on call missions requested by the BLTs. As an interior unit, the RCT was to regulate its advance in conformity with RCT 25 on the right, and RCT 9 on the left. Units jumped off at the prescribed King-Hour (0800), and continued the attack, but the advance was immediately held up by strong and determined enemy resistance from caves and pillboxes to the front and flanks. A second artillery preparation was fired from 1200 to 1230, and small gains were made resulting in the destruction of two entrenched enemy tanks that had been impeding the advance. At 1400, small gains of one-hundred to one-hundred and fifty yards had been made along the entire RCT front. Resistance in the left of the RCT zone had been considerably reduced; however, on the right, heavy enfilade fire from RCT 25 zone limited the advance of 3/23. In order to reconstitute 2/23 as a full BLT, in preparation for commitment the next day, Co E, BLT 2/24, was attached to 2/23 at 1530. In the small advance that was carved out during the afternoon, tanks were used in support of 3/23 after a route of approach had been bulldozed to the forward area by a tank bulldozer accompanied by engineers. By late afternoon elements of 3/23 had pushed forward close to the top of HILL 382, and were engaged in fierce close combat for the possession of the radar station at 200 Y, on the summit of 382. At 1715, an RCT order was issued to all units to consolidate on the most favorable ground for the night with solid contact left and right. At the same time a warning order was

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issued to be prepared to continue the attack at 0815, on 28 February. The RCT Reserve and GP continued in their same locations.

DOG PLUS NINE, 28 FEBRUARY, 1945

Intermittent concentrations of light and heavy mortar fire fell on the front line positions and rear areas during the night. At 0043, enemy cargo parachutes were reported to be falling along the front of the RCT's lines, some 400 to 600 yards into enemy territory. No alert had been received. This area was thoroughly pounded by artillery, to destroy any cargo, or enemy personnel trying to recover them. No evidence of the effectiveness of this shelling was found, but the intensity of the fire was such that the greater bulk of any such cargo must have been destroyed. At 2400, Division Operation Order 9-45 for the continuation of the attack was received, and at approximately 0300, RCT Operation Order 7-45 was issued to all units. RCT 23 continued the attack after an artillery, naval gunfire and air preparation from King minus forty-five to King-Hour. 2/14 remained in direct support of RCT 23. BLT 2/23 with attachments of Co E, BLT 2/24, and the 2d Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, executed a relief of 3/23 on the line at 0600, and resumed control of George Company, 2/23. 3/23, upon being relieved, passed to RCT Reserve, and continued mopping-up operations in the rear of the RCT zone. One Platoon of Company B, 4th Tk Bn, was assigned to support the attack, with the remainder of the company assembled prepared to execute missions on order. Because of the changing direction of attack, the boundary between assault BLTs had been slightly adjusted, re-assigning HILL 382 to the zone of the left BLT, instead of the right BLT as on the previous day. At 0815, BLTs 2/23 and 1/23 abreast, 2/23 on the right, jumped off in the attack, meeting comparatively light resistance initially. BLT 2/23 on the right advanced about 200 yards before being stopped by increasing mortar fire and the cross-fire from mutually supporting automatic weapons in concealed bunkers and pillboxes. On the left, in 1/23 zone, resistance was encountered from mortars falling around HILL 382, and also from automatic weapons fire from the left front and the western slopes of 382. At 1300, after a ten minute artillery preparation, a coordinated attack was launched in conjunction with

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RCT 21 on the left which netted a ground gain of approximately 300 yards in left of BLT 1/23 zone of action. At 1415, Co A, BLT 1, maneuvered around the eastern slopes of HILL 382, and, by enveloping action, destroyed two dug-in enemy tanks in the area. This enabled the troops to move into positions from which installations on the crest of 382 could be effectively re-engaged. At about 1530, Cos K and L, BLT 3/23, were alerted, and soon thereafter moved to reinforce the lines of BLT 1 and BLT 2, respectively, for the night. Considerable difficulty was experienced by BLT 1 in closing the gap on the left with RCT 21. It was necessary to move two platoons of the reserve company into the gap under cover of darkness in order to establish the contact. In so doing, these elements were fired on by the Japs from a pocket that had been by-passed in RCT 21 zone during the day. Some casualties were incurred to troops of BLT 1. The average ground gained during the attack this date approximated 200 yards on the right and 300 yards on the left. The employment of the tanks of Co B, 4th Tk Bn, during the day was restricted because of difficulties of terrain, and heavy AT gunfire which could not be located. As a result of the day's operations, the major resistance in the vicinity of HILL 382 and the surrounding area had been neutralized. However, enemy mortar concentrations registered on the hill proper prevented complete occupation of the high ground. Sniper fire in the area was reduced somewhat, but the movement of troops and vehicles in the open around the airfield still remained hazardous due to interdiction by enemy mortars. By 2300, contact with RCT 21 on the left had been gained and positions well established for night defense.

DOG PLUS TEN, 1 MARCH, 1945

During the night, strong infiltration attempts were made in the zones of Cos K and L, 3/23, 29 enemy dead being found around the front lines of K Co the next morning. Sporadic artillery and mortar fire fell throughout the RCT area. At 2230, Division Operation Order 10-45 was received, and the necessary details were coordinated with the unit commanders of RCT 24 to effect a relief on the line prior to daylight on 1 March. Commencing at approximately 0530, elements of RCT 24 moved into position to execute the relief. The relief was effected by BLT 2/24 taking over the zone

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of BLT 1/23, and BLT 1/24 the zone of BLT 2/23. By 0630, the relief had been completed. The two assault BLTs of RCT 24 continued the attack against resistance of the same nature encountered by units of RCT 23 on the previous day. BLT 2/23, at 0830, passed to VAC Reserve and moved into assembly area at 165 BC, closing in that area prior to 1200. BLT 3/23, on Division order, was attached to RCT 24, and assembled at TA 182 U. The RCT less 2/23 and 3/23 assumed a status as Division Reserve in TA 182 RSY, the CP remaining at 182 Y. At about 0920, 3/23 was released from RCT 24, and at 0930, passed to control of RCT 25. Co I, BLT 3/23 was assigned to BLT 1/25, and Co L to BLT 2/25. Co K remained under BLT 3/23 control, and was assigned the mission of mopping-up the cliff-line pocket at TA 183 INO. Attachments of Co C, 4th Tk Bn, and a section of 75mm Halftracks from R/W Co, RCT 23, were attached to 3/23 for this purpose. Throughout the day Co K was subjected to intense and accurate sniper fire in the area, but managed to partially reduce the effectiveness of Jap resistance in this pocket. On Division order (received at 1410), BLT 1/23 was alerted to be prepared to pass to RCT 24 control on twenty minutes notice. Mopping-up operations in the RCT area were continuous during the day, and reorganization and reequipping of the inactive units was accomplished. Only token enemy activity in the nature of sporadic mortar fire was encountered in the RCT assembly area during the day. In preparation for the night, Cos I and L of 3/23 were committed in the line with elements of RCT 25, and Co K was retained at the base of the cliff-line at 183 INO to contain the pocket in that area. There was no change in the location of the RCT CP, or of the RCT units, other than that already indicated.

DOG PLUS ELEVEN, 2 MARCH, 1945

The only evidence of enemy activity during the night in the RCT area was an occasional round of mortar or light artillery falling outside the perimeter of the assembly area. At about 2315, Division Operation Order 11-45 was received, assigning a continuation of reserve status to the RCT less BLTs 2/23 and 3/23. Instructions based on this order were issued verbally to the lower units of the RCT prior to 2400. 2/23 remained as VAC Reserve at TA 165 BC, and 3/23 remained attached to RCT 25 with no change in

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the assignment of companies from the previous day. Co K remained under 3/23 control and continued mopping-up operations of the cliff-line at 183 INO. The same attachments of tanks and 75mm Halftracks were assigned for use of Co K in this area. Despite the fact that sniper fire was intense and extremely accurate, considerable progress was made in reducing the enemy resistance. Small local counterattacks of groups of six to seven Japs were encountered and were systematically destroyed. Anti-sniper patrols were maintained in the rear areas, and the caves in the vicinity of TA 183 QR were completely mopped up by the use of War Dogs and engineer demolition teams. BLT 1/23 executed reconnaissance of routes of approach to the zones of action of RCT 24 and RCT 25, prepared to move on thirty minutes notice in support of either RCT in the Division zone. There was no change in CP or unit areas.

DOG PLUS TWELVE, 3 MARCH, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was again limited to periodic rounds of mortar or artillery fire. About 2330, Division Operation Order 12-45 was received, committing RCT 23 to the attack. RCT Operation Order 8-45 was issued to all units of the RCT by 0200, and all supplementary instructions had been completed by 0230. With King-Hour at 0745, the 4th Mar Div was to continue the attack at King minus 75, and seize O-3. Corps and Division artillery supported the attack, firing counter-battery on known or suspected targets from King minus 75 to King plus 30. 2/14 was assigned to direct support of the RCT. RCT 23, less 2/23 (VAC Reserve), and with BLTs 2/25 and 3/25 attached, at 0630 continued the attack with 1/23 relieving 1/25 on the line. BLT 3/23 reverted to RCT 23 at King minus 75, and was to assemble in RCT Reserve as rapidly as Cos I and L could be disengaged. Since BLTs 2/25 and 3/25, in the center and right of the RCT zone respectively, had advanced 200 to 300 yards forward of BLT 1/25 (on the left) during the preceding days of attack, it was planned that they should maintain their presently held positions, while the heavy resistance in the left of the RCT zone was reduced. RCT 24, adjacent on the left, had been able to advance on its left, but on its right was held up by same general area of resistance that had been confronting 1/25. This enemy stronghold was established on the most favorable ground

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within the Division zone, and appeared to be the core of the enemy's final positions. It was organized on the highest ground in the area, the westernmost part being HILL 382, and extensive fortifications had been dug into the broken rocky ridges, and were well concealed by the undergrowth and scrub that covered the zone. Because of this situation, it was imperative that the cliff-line pocket near the left RCT 23 boundary, in TA 183 INO, which formed a salient into our lines, be eliminated. In order to achieve this, while BLTs 2/25 and 3/25 held their positions, BLT 1/23 after relieving 1/25, was to attack at 0630, initially advancing one company (Co A) on its left, in contact with RCT 24. This would enable Co C, on the BLT right, to cut off the cliff-line strong point, and establish contact with BLT 2/25, on its right. The initial phase of the attack progressed favorably. Progress on the right was impeded by a blockhouse located on a promontory at TA 184 G, known as "Turkey Knob". The routes of approach to the blockhouse had been mined with anti-personnel mines, which were covered by heavy sniper fire. At about 1400, this blockhouse was partially reduced as a result of the action of infantry demolition teams and flame thrower tanks. At 1600, Co B, BLT 1, was committed to pass through Co C and continue the attack. BLTs 2/25 and 3/25 had maintained their initial positions, prepared to continue the attack when the contact on the left was established. The main enemy resistance encountered during the day consisted of extremely heavy automatic and sniper fire protecting approaches to covered enemy positions. Enemy light and heavy mortar fire was sporadic throughout the day in the RCT zone. BLT 3/23, in RCT Reserve, upon resuming control of Cos I and L instituted reorganization of these elements. Co K, with tanks and 75mm halftracks, remained below the cliff-line at TA 183 INO, mopping-up the cave positions with flamethrowers and demolitions. The 1st Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment supported the attack during the day with fire missions called by the assault BLTs. The employment of Co C, 4th Tk Bn, vehicles during the day was again limited due to unfavorable terrain. The general advance during the day averaged approximately 200 yards on the left and 150 yards on the right. At 1700, positions were consolidated for the night. Co C had not established contact with BLT 2/25, so, in order to contain the pocket, Co I of BLT 3/23 took up positions to the right rear of BLT 1, and

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line adjustment was effected enabling Co K to tie in with Co I and BLT 2/25. Earlier in the day, at 1100, 197 enlisted replacements had been received; these were assigned to R/W Co, BLT 1/23 and BLT 3/23 in proportion to the losses sustained by these units. No displacement of the RCT CP occurred during the day.

DOG PLUS THIRTEEN, 4 MARCH, 1945

Little enemy activity was noted during the night in the RCT zone except for the usual sporadic concentrations of mortar fire along the front lines and in the rear areas. There were some close-range hand grenade exchanges and light infiltration along the front of BLT 1/23. Prior to 2100, verbal instructions were issued for continuation of the attack on 4 March. Boundaries, zones of action and the objective remained the same, with no change in the scheme of maneuver or employment of troops. Corps and Division artillery were to fire preparation from King minus fifteen to King plus fifteen minutes, King-Hour being 0730. The LD for the attack was the front lines at King-Hour. At 0730, BLT 1/23 continued the attack on the left, regulating its advance in conformity with the movement of RCT 24. BLTs 2/25 and 3/25 in the center and right of the RCT zone respectively, held the line at the previous position, prepared to continue the attack in conformance with the advance of 1/23 on the left. After small gains of approximately 50 to 75 yards, the leading elements of 1/23 were pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire from the zone of RCT 24 on the left. Further advance in this zone was dependent upon the forward movement of 1/24, and elimination of the resistance impeding the progress of the attack. At 1500, following a 15 minute artillery preparation, a coordinated attack was launched in conjunction with RCT 24. By 1600, very little progress had been made. Strong, determined enemy resistance continued with machine-gun and accurate rifle fire from the left front particularly heavy. Sporadic light and heavy mortar fire on our lines continued all during the day. At 1700, patrols from Co B, BLT 1/23, were sent forward across the unoccupied area to establish contact with the left of 2/25. The right of the RCT zone remained static during the entire period, 2/25 and 3/25 throughout the day (still attached to RCT 23) continuing to wait for the units on the left

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to come abreast. 2/23 continued in VAC Reserve at TA 165 BC, and 3/23, in RCT Reserve, continued mopping-up operations in the same cliff-line (at TA 183 INO). Considerable progress was reported by 3/23 as a result of extensive work in this area, but complete mopping-up had not yet been effected. Engineers were employed during the day for the execution of heavy demolition work on caves and dugout positions. Tank employment was still restricted by rough terrain. An average gain of 150 yards had been made in the RCT zone during the day. In preparation for consolidated for the night, Co L (3/23) moved into positions along the right boundary of BLT 1/23, tying in between Co K (still containing the pocket in 183 INO from the south), and the left element of BLT 2/25. At 1700, consolidation was completed.

DOG PLUS FOURTEEN, 5 MARCH, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was limited to occasional rounds of light artillery and mortar fire in the vicinity of the front lines. At 2000, an RCT order was issued to all units, prescribing instructions for a relief on the line by RCT 25 at 0600, 5 March. Final plans for the relief were coordinated with the RCT 25 staff prior to 2200. At 0600, BLT 1/23 was relieved on the line by 1/25, and closed in its new assembly area at TA 182 RS at 0800. At about 1000, 3/23 was relieved from the mopping-up operation on the cliff-line at TA 183 INO by Co L, 3/25, and the Division Reconnaissance Company. It proceeded to assembly area vicinity TA 183 KL, closing at 1100. BLT 2/23 remained in VAC Reserve until 1500, at which time it was relieved in its assignment by 1/23, and reverted to RCT 23 control. Both units continued in their presently assigned positions. During the day units reorganized and reequipped in preparation for further operation. Except for occasional rounds of mortar and rocket fire, no enemy activity was encountered in the RCT zone during the day. The RCT CP continued at TA 182 Y, southwest corner.

DOG PLUS FIFTEEN, 6 MARCH, 1945

The quiet throughout the night in the RCT zone was broken by occasional rounds of rocket or mortar fire. 0000 Division

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Operation Order 15-45 was received, and RCT Operation Order 9-45 for the continuation of the attack was completed and distributed to all units of the RCT prior to 0200. The plan for the attack was to pass RCT 23 (less BLT 1/23), in column of battalions, through the left Bn of RCT 24 at King plus 60, and to take over in that zone, making the main effort of the Division. In support of the attack of RCT 23 and adjacent units of the 3d Division on its left, the nine battalions of Divisional artillery and the two battalions of Corps artillery were to mass their fires, firing concentrations successive in depth from King plus 45 to King plus 81. Commencing at 0600, BLT 2/23 relieved 3/24 on the line in the left of RCT 24 zone. Prior to 0700, 3/23 less Co L (RCT Reserve), moved into assembly area at TA 200 R, prepared to support the attack of 2/23 at 400 yards. 1/23 remained in VAC reserve at TA 182 VW. At King-Hour plus 60 (0900), 2/23 jumped off and was immediately engaged by heavy enemy resistance in the form of automatic weapon and accurate rifle fire from the front. Gains of approximately 300 yards were made in the left of the BLT zone, but the right was retarded due to increasing enemy activity from prepared fortifications and natural covered positions. The unusual nature of the terrain in the zone of action, characterized by a series of jagged ridges and heavy undergrowth, provided a distinct advantage to the enemy and severely limited the movement of friendly troops. Rifle fire in the right of the zone was intense and accurate up to distances of 350 yards. At 1500, Co K, BLT 3/23, was attached to BLT 2/23, passing through Co F, 2/23, and continuing the attack at 1600, but no appreciable gains were netted as a result of this change. During the attack the effective employment of supporting arms was reduced to the minimum because the unfavorable nature of the terrain. Several times during the progress of the attack artillery fire was adjusted by FOs to within 125 yards of the front line troops. The unsuitability of the terrain and the lack of routes of approach minimized the employment of the tanks of Co C in the right of the zone. Four tanks were employed in the left of the RCT to engage pillboxes and cave positions by direct fire with good effect. One Platoon of Co C, 4th Engr Bn, was attached to 2/23 to assist in demolitions work, and the remaining two platoons were attached to 3/23 for rear area mopping-up and heavy demolition missions on large caves. **UNCLASSIFIED**

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in the RCT zone during the attack averaged 350 yards from the line of departure. However, due to the erroneous reporting of the King-Hour position of elements of RCT 24, the result of the days operation appeared limited, almost negligible, on the map. Positions were consolidated for the night at 1700, and some difficulty was experienced in tying in a gap of about 100 yards to the 3d Mar Div on the left. The RCT CP remained at 182 Y.

DOG PLUS SIXTEEN, 7 MARCH, 1945

At 2300, RCT Operation Order 10-45 was issued for the continuation of the attack on 7 March. Enemy activity during the hours of darkness grew progressively more intense, with frequent exchanges of rifle and machine-gun fire, and close-in hand grenade fighting along the entire front. Intermittent concentrations of rocket and heavy mortar fire fell on the front lines and rear positions, and, at approximately 0515, one of several rounds of heavy caliber rocket fire hit in the BLT 2/23 CP. As a result, the Commanding Officer of the BLT, and several key members of his staff (the BLT executive officer, operations officer and adjutant) suffered wounds and concussion. The staff members were evacuated; the BLT Commander remained in tactical control and effected temporary reorganization of the unit. At daylight, the RCT Executive Officer assumed command of BLT 2/23, the BLT Commander then being evacuated for medical treatment. The temporary reorganization instituted by the BLT Commander was completed by the RCT Executive Officer, utilizing a skeleton staff of officers and enlisted personnel from RCT Headquarters and other units. In order to effect this reorganization, a half-hour delay in King-Hour was obtained. At 0800 (the new King-Hour), RCT 23 continued the attack to seize O-3 within its assigned zone. Boundaries remained unchanged. BLT 2/23 (with Co K, 3/23, attached) was in assault, attacking with three companies abreast (left to right, Cos G, E, and K), and one company (F) in reserve, assembled to the rear of Co G. BLT 3/23 (less Co K) continued in RCT reserve, and 1/23 in VAC reserve, both remaining in their previous assembly areas. Initially, the attack progressed favorably on the left, with Co G making moderate gains against comparatively light resistance. In the center and on the right, however, bitter resistance was fully developed and

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the advance soon stopped. In accordance with plans pre-arranged to meet this eventuality, Co G pressed the attack, opening a gap on its right flank, and uncovering Co F, to its rear. Co F immediately attacked the flank of the strong point confronting Cos E and K, reduced it, took over the zone of Co E, and continued the attack. Freed from the fire from its left flank, Co K was able to advance, and soon came abreast, the whole maneuver being completed by 0900. Upon being pinched out, Co E passed to BLT reserve. Very soon afterward, strong positions were again developed, this time along the entire BLT front, and the attack was held to small gains throughout the remainder of the day. The resistance consisted principally of heavy machine-gun fire, supported by intermittent mortar fire and very accurate rifle fire from concealed positions in the rocky ridge formations and draws along the front. Co E remained in BLT reserve throughout the rest of the day and, at 1200, a fresh company (I) was attached to BLT 2/23 from the RCT Reserve. This company moved into position in left of the BLT zone, behind Co G, at 1200. During the course of the day, Co G had advanced about 200 yards forward of the 3d Division elements on its left. Late in the afternoon, the left flank of G was withdrawn in order to re-establish physical contact, and RCT positions had been consolidated for the night by 1800. Front-line dispositions for the night were, left to right, Cos G, F, and K; the BLT reserve line was occupied Cos I and E, in positions slightly to the flanks of the center of the BLT zone. Gains of 400 yards on the left and 150 yards on the right had been made during the day. Thirty-nine enlisted replacements had been assigned to the RCT, and these were forwarded after processing to BLT 1/23 which continued as VAC Reserve. The RCT CP continued at TA 182 Y.

DOG PLUS SEVENTEEN, 8 MARCH, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was limited to intermittent light and heavy concentrations of mortar fire on the front line positions and in the vicinity of the BLT 2/23 CP. Occasional exchanges of small arms fire evidenced the activity of the enemy close in to the lines. Prior to daylight, Co E relieved Co K in the line, and Co K moved into BLT reserve in positions to the rear of Co E. At King minus 90 (0620), RCT 23 (less 1/23, VAC Reserve), continued the attack in column of BLTs with BLT 2/23 (Co K attached) in assault, supported by 3/23 (Ips and K). The main effort

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of the attack was on the right, in order to facilitate execution of a change in the direction of attack to conform with the peculiarities of terrain. The assigned objective was the coast in the RCT zone of action. On the left, Co G moved out at King-Hour, and shifted laterally to the left boundary. In the center, Co F regulated its advance so as to maintain contact with its adjacent units, and on its right Co E continued the attack. Only slight gains were made, principally due to the extreme difficulty of maintaining contact in the broken terrain, with its obstacles of rocky ledges, outcroppings and cliffs. At about 0910, it was determined that in the change of direction Co E of BLT 2/23 had shifted to the right, and was occupying a portion of RCT 24's zone of action. This situation was remedied by shifting Co E laterally to the left while Co K, slightly to the rear, covered the gap to facilitate the relief of Co E by Co I of 3/24. When the lines were properly adjusted, Co E passed to BLT 2/23 reserve. Upon completion of the disengagement of Co E, Co I was committed in the center of the BLT zone, between Cos G and F. At 1200, Co L (3/23) was attached to 2/23, and Co K was released to parent control. Co L, BLT Reserve, moved into an assembly area in the rear of Co G, in the left of the BLT zone. During the day the forward movement continued against initial light resistance which soon increased to the characteristic bitter defense of the same nature and pattern encountered in the preceding days. At the most, only slight gains were netted during the period. Two Platoons of Co C, 4th Engr Bn, were attached to BLT 2/23 for demolition work in rear of the lines. The employment of tanks was again limited by the terrain. A strong center of resistance had been developed astride the boundary between RCT 23 and RCT 24 (adjacent on the right). The attack had passed beyond this point, but not sufficiently far to permit cutting-off the strong point. In order to contain this salient into our lines, Co E (2/23) was committed on the right flank, and tied in over a long and difficult line with the right forward element of RCT 23 (Co F) and the left element of RCT 24 (Co I, 3/24). At 1800, consolidation had been completed. The disposition of the units of BLT 2/23 were, from left to right, Companies G, I, and F, with Co E securing the right flank, and in contact with RCT 24. Co L was in BLT reserve, with elements supporting both flanks.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

DOG PLUS EIGHTEEN, 9 MARCH, 1945

At about 1900 on the previous night, Division Operation Order 18-45 for the continuation of the attack on 9 March was received, and instructions were immediately issued by dispatch to the subordinate units of the RCT. Enemy activity began at about 1800 and mounted in intensity, reaching the maximum around 2330. Rocket, heavy mortar, grenade and small arms fire was received along the entire RCT line, being particularly heavy on the right of the zone, along the boundary with RCT 24. At 2300, BLT 2 reported large scale attempts at infiltration on the right of the RCT zone, to the front of Co E. What initially appeared as infiltration tactics developed into a carefully planned enemy counterattack in force to seize a definitely assigned objective. The attack was preceded by probing of the front lines to determine the weak spots. The enemy made good use of the torn and twisted terrain to infiltrate our lines and collect behind them. The point of heaviest enemy activity continued to be along the RCT boundary. In this area Co E took the brunt of the Jap attack, accounting for the annihilation of some 400 enemy troops during the night. Intense close quarter fighting prevailed throughout the hours of darkness, with the enemy being killed up to the very edge of the fox holes in the company position. Small groups of enemy succeeded in breaking through the line positions and managed to get into the rear area in the vicinity of the BLT 2/23 CP, at TA 201 K. All were well armed with grenades, and some carried demolition charges. Close-in fire and grenade exchanges continued in the CP all night, ending at dawn when all of the enemy were wiped out. A total of 30 Japs had penetrated in to the BLT CP. In the left of the RCT zone, the enemy had attempted infiltration on a lesser scale. During the preliminary stages of the enemy attack, elements of Co L had been dispatched to reinforce Co E, which had suffered some casualties as the result of enemy action. At daylight, the elements of Co L returned to company control, and immediate mopping-up operations were instituted in the RCT zone. At King-Hour (0700), BLT 2 remained in position, prepared to continue the attack in conformity with the advance of RCT 21 on the left and RCT 24 on the right, and supported by fire the advance of RCT 24. No change of line positions was effected during the morning since the adjacent units were unable to advance. Mopping-up operations continued in

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the entire RCT zone and were completed by 1200. At 1430, 1/23 was released from VAC Reserve and reverted to RCT control. By 1445, the left elements of RCT 24 had come abreast of BLT 2/23. At 1500, Co L passed through Co F (in the right of the 2/23 zone). The attack continued with Companies G, I and L in assault. Resistance was substantially decreased from that encountered in the same area on the previous day, this being attributed to the large number of enemy killed during the night in the unsuccessful attempt at counterattack. Approximately 200 additional enemy dead, evidently killed by our artillery and mortar concentrations, were found in the newly seized area. At 1600, Companies E and F were detached from 2/23, and joined Co K under BLT 3/23 control. 3/23 then passed to VAC reserve, completing assembly in TA 165 BC prior to 1700.

DOG PLUS NINETEEN, 10 MARCH, 1945

The enemy was relatively quiet during the night, and only minor activity was reported by the front-line units. For the first time there was no enemy mortar or artillery fire in the RCT zone. At King-Hour (0800) BLT 3/24 was attached, and RCT 23 took over the left sector of RCT 24, in which 3/24 had been operating and was then in the line. The attack was continued with 2/23 and 3/24 abreast, 3/24 on the right. 1/23 remained in RCT reserve in rear of 2/23 prepared to support the attack, and mopped-up caves in the rear areas. 3/23 (less Cos I and L, and with Cos E and F attached) continued in VAC reserve. On the left, considerable progress was made against light resistance in the nature of rifle fire from the cliff-line along the left (Division) boundary. On the right, 3/24 advanced slowly, encountering small pockets of stubborn resistance in caves and sniper positions in the deep fissures along the broken ridge lines to the front. After steady pressure during the day considerable progress was made, and favorable positions were occupied along a general line 400 to 600 yards inland from the beach. In the right of the RCT zone, the right company of BLT 3/24 was retarded by strong resistance along the RCT boundary. In the left BLT zone, the left company (G) had encountered little resistance, and had pushed forward over 200 yards. Here it had been forced to halt, since the adjacent unit of the 3d Division on its left had been unable to advance onto the high nose of the Division boundary.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

ary. The cliff on the south side of this nose loomed on Co G's left, and any further advance would have caused dangerous exposure of its flank. Security for the opened flank had been obtained by establishing a platoon from Co C (1/23) on commanding ground at 202 F. In order to flank the stubborn positions on the high nose and to the north of it, one 3d Division BLT (1/9) was sent around behind 2/23. After some adjustment of positions, this BLT attacked to the north, but was stopped at the foot of the cliff in TA 202 FGM. 1/9's inability to secure this commanding position prevented the advance of 2/23 to the coast, but at 1500 a patrol was sent to the coast in the vicinity of TA 186 A. By 1700, this patrol had returned without encountering any enemy personnel or active installations. During the day the whole of Co C, 4th Engr Bn, had been attached to BLT 2/23 for heavy demolitions work on cave positions and for clearing mine fields along the roads in the BLT zone. Operating from these roads, the tanks of Co C, 4th Tank Bn, delivered effective fire in support of the attack of 1/9. During the afternoon 3/23 was released from VAC reserve to RCT control, and it assembled in RCT reserve in vicinity of the sugar refinery at 201 K. Preparations for the night were initiated about 1600, with two platoons of Co A, 1/23, being attached to 3/24 to assist in securing a gap in depth it had created on its right. Sewing-up was expeditiously effected, being completed by 1700.

DOG PLUS TWENTY, 11 MARCH, 1945

No enemy activity of special note occurred during the night. At King minus 60 (0730), RCT 23 continued the attack to seize the remainder of the island within its zone, with no change in boundaries or units in the line. On the left 2/23 encountered no resistance, but was unable to advance the entire line to the coast until the 3d Division secured the right zone of its area along the high ground at the Division boundary. Strong combat patrols with engineer demolition squads were sent forward to the beach and encountered no enemy resistance. On the right 3/24 encountered a strong pocket vicinity TA 185 K, which took Co K (3/24) all day to neutralize. At 1300, Co K (3/23) was attached to 3/24 to assist in cleaning out this resistance and sewing-up the area. Both were accomplished by 1600. Mopping-up of the entire RCT zone was contin-

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

uous throughout the day, and, at 1445 2/23 reported that the beach area on the left of the RCT zone was secured. At 1530, 1/23 initiated relief of 2/23, taking over the same positions occupied by 2/23 on the previous night, and assuming control of Co C, 4th Engr Bn. By 1700, 1/23 completed the relief. BLT 2/23 (less Co F) returned to a rear assembly area in TA 165 BC, and closed prior 1830. Co F occupied a rear security line as an anti-infiltration measure in the vicinity of TA 200 N. Cos I and L passed to parent control and occupied a reserve line in rear of 1/23 in TA 201 JOTY. By 1645, the beach area in 3/24 zone was reached by troops, and RCT 23 reported completion of the assigned mission in its zone of action. The RCT CP continued at TA 182 Y.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-ONE, 12 MARCH, 1945

Units on the defensive line 400 yards from the coast spent a quiet night, with only weak enemy activity in evidence in the area. At King-Hour, 0900, systematic mopping-up operations were initiated in the RCT zone, starting at the beach and working progressively backward. Extensive use of demolitions by engineers during the day assisted greatly in accomplishing the mission. Most of the caves and dugouts in the zone were sealed. The burial of enemy dead, salvage of equipment and general police of the area was continuous throughout the entire day. No changes in the assignment of troops or disposition on the ground was effected. By 1600, units reported 75% completion of the mopping-up operations for the day. Prior to 1700, defenses were consolidated for the night on the same lines as occupied during the previous period.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-TWO, 13 MARCH, 1945

The enemy was inactive during the night within RCT 23 zone of action. At 0700 mopping-up operations, burial of enemy dead, salvage and police of the zone of responsibility was in progress. Co L (3/23) passed to control of 3/24 in order to effect the relief of Co K (3/23). The relief was completed by 1730, Co K then reverting to parent control. By 1600, mopping-up and police of the RCT zone of responsibility was 95% completed. All units of Co C, 4th Engr Bn, were detached from units in the forward area, and were

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assembled under parent control in the vicinity of the RCT CP. Orders were issued assigning rear assembly areas for RCT units when relieved from the line. During the day BLT 2/23, in assembly, was alerted to be prepared to move its remaining elements to establish a rear RCT security line at 200 WXY in the event of any large scale infiltration through the forward positions of the 3d Marine Division. Considerable small-arms fire from friendly troops in the 3d Division zone fell in the area physically occupied by our own units. Activity in the vicinity of the RCT CP at 182 Y continued quiet.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-THREE, 14 MARCH, 1945

No positive contacts with the enemy were made during the hours of darkness. Some minor attempts at infiltration were reported which were believed to be isolated individuals or small groups of the enemy, cut off in the rear areas and wandering about aimlessly. At 0630, RCT 23 continued mopping-up, burial of enemy dead, salvage and general police within the zone of responsibility. Around 0810, the unimproved road in the vicinity of TA 185 ABG was subjected to enemy small arms fire and traffic on the road was temporarily suspended pending the reduction of the enemy fire by patrols of 3/24. Mopping-up activity was continuous in the zone throughout the entire day with large quantities of demolitions being expended on sealing the entrance to the open caves remaining within the area. At 1315, Det of 7th War Dog Platoon was released from RCT 23 control and re-assigned to the 3d Mar Div. At 1750, Cos I and L (3/23) were established on an RCT rear security line in the vicinity of TA 201 KPU to prevent any infiltration into the rear areas from the 3d Mar Div zone of action. These companies closed in the new defensive area at 1930. Prior to 2100, all units were ordered to continue assigned missions in the present areas on 15 March and further, to be prepared to release the maximum organizational equipment for loading aboard ship when ordered. Embarkation points had been established and ship assignments were completed on this date.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-FOUR, 15 MARCH, 1945

Enemy activity during the night was limited to unsuccessful attempts at infiltration in the center of BLT 3/24 zone of action.

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Commencing at daylight patrols were sent out from 3/24 to locate an enemy machine gun reported by RCT 25 to be in the vicinity of TA 185 F. After close search of the indicated area the patrols returned with negative reports. At 0830, the advance parties of RCT 23 began movement to Beach Blue 2 for embarkation on shipping assigned to the RCT. Mopping-up and salvage in the RCT area of responsibility was continuous during the day, but because of enemy action from pockets of resistance in the 3d Mar Div zone complete mopping-up was not accomplished. This was especially true of areas adjacent to and along the Division left boundary. At 1110, small patrols were sent forward from 3/24 to eliminate scattered sniper fire in the vicinity of 185 AF. By 1700, Co L (3/23), attached to 3/24, was pinched out on the line by the advance of RCT 25 on the right, and the company remained in position attached to 3/24 for the night. By 1745, positions were consolidated for the night in the same areas as occupied on the previous nights.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-FIVE, 16 MARCH, 1945

No enemy activity of any nature was reported during the previous night. At daylight Co L reverted to control of 3/23. All units conducted a final sweep within the zone to complete salvage and burial of enemy dead. The area included in this final phase of mopping-up started at the beach and extended back through the RCT zone to the rear RCT boundary at TA 183 AGM. Co F reverted to 2/23 control at daylight, and all units of 2/23 proceeded to the embarkation point at 0700, embarking upon arrival aboard LST 761. All troops and equipment of 2/23 were aboard the USS Rockbridge by 2300. BLT 1/23, upon completion of final mopping-up, proceeded to the embarkation point at 1000, and embarked aboard LST 761 about 1300. 3/23 embarked aboard LST 761 at 1030. Other elements of the RCT proceeded to the embarkation point in assigned order and embarked aboard LST 761. At 1115, the RCT Commander and staff conducted an inspection tour of the RCT zone of responsibility and found the area to be in satisfactory condition. By 1315, RCT 23 Commander and staff embarked aboard LST 761. By 2300, 16 March, all troops and equipment assigned to RCT 23 for embarkation and loading were aboard assigned ships.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

RCT 23 Embarkation Plan at Iwo Jima consisted of the following:

USS ROCKBRIDGE (APA 228)

H&S Co., 23d Marines.
R/W Co., 23d Marines.
BLT 2/23.
3d Band Section (less Dets).
3d Plat, 4th MP Co.
Det 1st JASCO.
Co C, 4th T&B Bn.
2d Bn, 14th Marines.
Det 4th Engr Bn.

USS KINGSBURY (APA 177)

Det H&S Co, 23d Marines.
BLT 1/23.
BLT 3/23.
Co C, 4th Med Bn.
Det 1st JASCO.
3d Amph Trac Bn (less dets).
Det 3d Band Section.
Det V Phib Corps.
Co C, 4th Engr Bn.

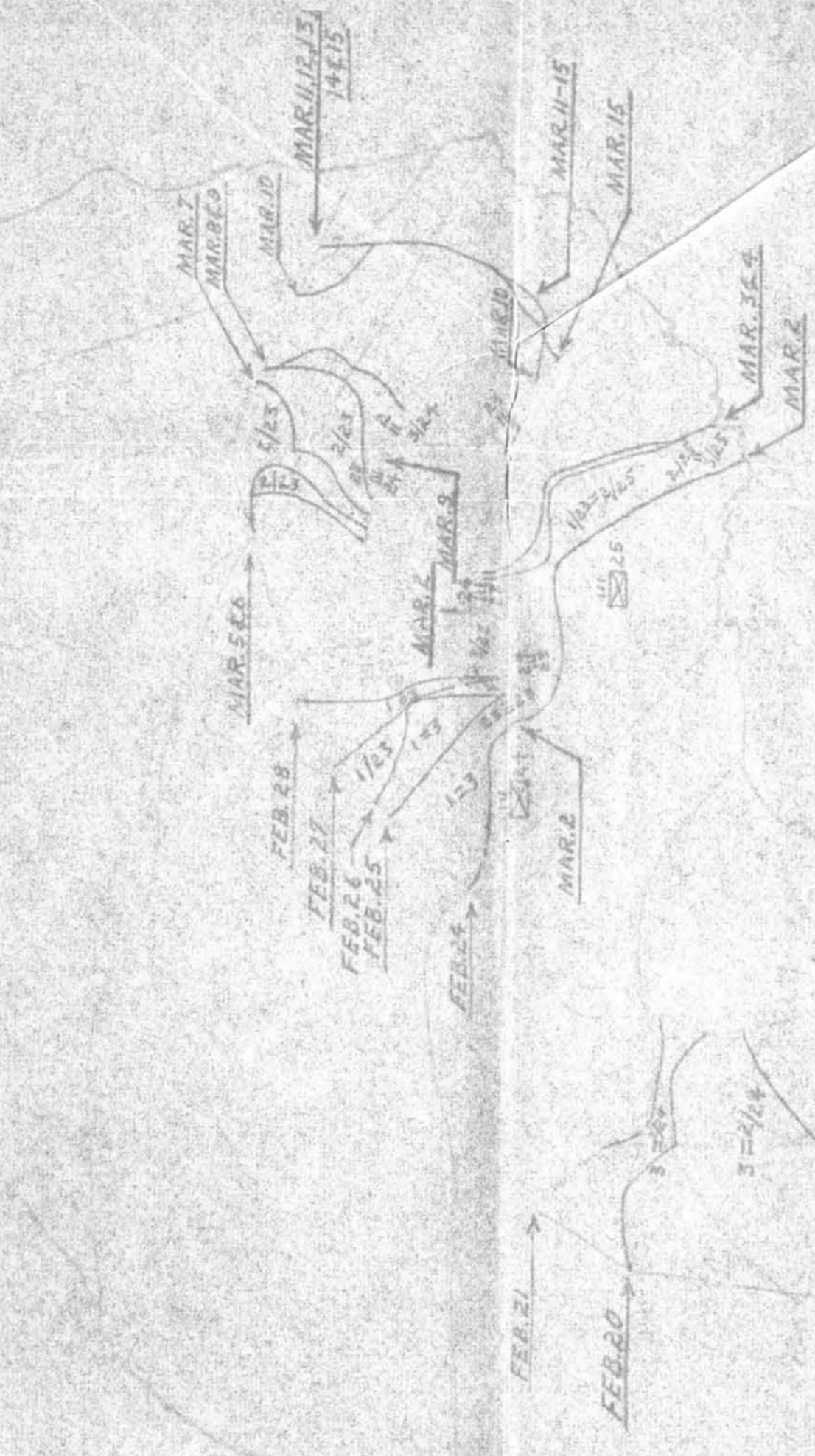
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78

80
78

72
75

72
80



RCT 23
 COMPOSITE SITUATION OVERLAY
 PERIOD, 19, FEB. THRU 15, MAR. 1945
 IWO JIMA
 SPECIAL AIR GUNNERY TARGET MAP
 SCALE 1:20,000

RCT 23 IN RESERVE:
 22, 23, 24 FEB.
 1, MARCH
 2, MARCH
 3, MARCH

— LINE ON WHICH TROOPS DUG IN FOR THE NIGHT
 BOUNDARY AND PHASE LINES

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SECTION V

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) Organic Replacements.

The replacements assigned to bring this organization to full strength were not assigned until approximately four weeks prior to the embarkation of the main elements of the RCT. Under the conditions certain to exist at such a time, when BLT and higher echelons staffs are largely preoccupied with the multitudinous details incident to planning for an imminent operation, and when the combined training of larger units must be accomplished, it is impossible to effectively train new personnel. In order to thoroughly train such personnel, and weld them into the fighting team, such personnel must be provided not later than three months prior to an operation, and it is recommended that this be done. The failure to do so seriously affected the fighting efficiency of this RCT. Similarly, in order to maintain the team at peak strength, a 5% overstrength of personnel should be provided at the same time, in order to provide the means for detailing rear echelon personnel.

(b) Battle Replacements.

About six weeks prior to embarkation, a replacement draft earmarked for later use as battle replacements was attached to the RCT as part of the Shore Party (the Ship Platoons). The personnel were billeted in the regimental area and trained, to a limited extent, under RCT control. Such a practice is highly desirable, and it is strongly recommended that it be continued, but that the draft be made available two months prior to embarkation.

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2. INTELLIGENCE.

(a) Maps.

The G-2 Situation Map, scale 1:10,000, dated 11 February, 1945, was of great value, not only because of the detailed enemy information shown thereon, but also because of its increased accuracy over the official map for the operation. It is recommended that such a map, containing the latest information as to the enemy and the terrain, be distributed in quantity just prior to each operation.

(b) Photographs.

Many of the photograph sets issued to the RCT were of little value. It is recommended that many sets of a few good sorties, rather than a few sets of many sorties, be disseminated to each RCT.

(c) Counterintelligence.

To the maximum extent possible, planning and dissemination of classified material pertaining to an operation should be accomplished prior to embarkation. Maintaining security in the cramped quarters aboard ship is most difficult.

(d) Communications.

A Division Intelligence radio net, to include Battalion 2's, should be employed for rapid interchange of information. Because of its range, dependability, and portability, the SCR 300 would be ideal for this purpose.

3. OPERATIONS.

(a) Embarkation of Naval Control Personnel.

Although otherwise well coordinated, the plan for embarking the naval officer personnel directly responsible for control

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of the landing of the assault troops was deficient in one essential: boat group and wave guide officers were not in all cases embarked aboard the same ship with the BLT Commander with whom they were to operate. It is considered absolutely imperative that this be done. At every opportunity, the RCT and BLT Commanders participated in the indoctrination of these officers, but since many of them were embarked on other ships, even other transport divisions, it was impossible to maintain continuous liaison.

(b) Infantry.

(1) Assault Weapons.

The powerful defensive fortifications and the difficult terrain encountered on Iwo Jima severely impaired the effectiveness of supporting weapons, and indicated a deficiency in our assault armament. In many cases it was not possible to bring direct tank fire or other heavy weapons of the RCT to bear upon the pillboxes and blockhouses opposing the advance of our troops, nor was it possible to disrupt the enemy's carefully coordinated defenses by the use of other supporting arms. These positions fell only to the flame-thrower and demolitions of the assault teams. In order to provide more adequate support under such conditions, a rocket of 4.5" or 5" caliber, incorporating the shaped charged principle, and possessing the characteristics of accuracy and trajectory of the 2.36" rocket, should be developed. Such a weapon should have an effective range of 250 to 300 yards, and the launcher should be sufficiently portable to permit its quick emplacement and operation in the most difficult terrain by a crew of not more than two men.

(2) Supporting Weapons.

a. Regimental Weapons.

Based on experience gained in recent operations, two recommendations are submitted with regard to the armament of the Weapons Company of the infantry regiment. First, the 57mm AT gun should replace the 37mm AT gun as the principal company

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weapon, in order to provide a more effective weapon for anti-tank defense and infantry support. The difficulty of siting the heavier weapon should not materially affect employment. As an alternate weapon, for operations in difficult terrain, particularly during the landing phase, a 37mm gun dismountable into man-loads, and capable of quick re-assembly, should be provided. Such a weapon should, insofar as practicable, retain the characteristics of accuracy, high velocity and flat trajectory possessed by the present 37mm gun, and should be provided with the same types and percentages of ammunition.

b. Tanks.

Difficulties in tank-infantry coordination arose from communication deficiencies. Continual intensive enemy mortar shelling of the tanks prevented effective use of the telephone handset attached to the rear of the tank. In order to minimize exposure of infantry personnel using the set, it should be provided with a self-winding reel for assault wire, of at least 100-foot capacity, and equipped with a drop device so that, during periods of heavy fire, the set can be dropped near a covered position while the tank itself moves away. The SCR 300's provided in the platoon leaders' tanks as an auxiliary means of communication were useful, but their efficacy was hampered by the frequent casualties to these tanks. All tanks should be so equipped.

c. Division Mortar Battalion.

Mortars were extensively and efficiently used by the enemy, strongly indicating two principal deficiencies in our own mortar equipment. The present heavy shell for the 81mm mortar (M56) repeatedly failed to detonate, and its delayed action prevented effective use against personnel. This shell should be provided with an improved fuse, capable of selection between instantaneous and delayed detonation. Second, the larger caliber mortars so effectively demonstrated by the enemy are lacking in our present organization. To rectify this, it is recommended that a mortar battalion be organized in the Marine Division con-

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RCT 23 OPERATIONS REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

sisting of two companies of 4.2" chemical mortars (8 to 12 mortars each) and one company of 155mm mortars (6 to 8 mortars). The employment contemplated is that the 4.2" companies would be attached to and employed by the assault RCTs, while the 155mm company would operate under division control in the manner of special purpose artillery.

(c) Supporting Arms.

(1) Artillery.

Two recommendations are submitted for increasing the effectiveness of artillery support. First, in an operation of this nature, where the defense is based upon a system of ruggedly constructed permanent fortifications, divisional artillery has little destructive effect. Accordingly, a greater amount of heavy caliber Corps artillery, capable of breaching pillboxes and similar positions, should be provided. Second, for all subsequent operations, a 105mm howitzer illuminating shell should be provided, in order to ensure adequate illumination, to decrease the burden upon supporting illuminating ships, and to permit company commanders to limit their 60mm mortars to emergency use, in order to prevent disclosure of their forward firing positions.

(2) Naval Gunfire.

It is recommended that infantry officers of considerable experience be placed aboard firing ships during both pre-Dog-day and subsequent bombardments, to work in coordination with the ships' gunnery officers. With their knowledge of Jap tactics, and their ability to analyze the terrain, these officers should be of material assistance in the selection of the most important known targets, and in determining the location of probable enemy positions.

(3) Air Support.

With regard to the general time schedule set for air, it is re-affirmed that support for call missions should be over the target as soon as physically possible after being called up

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

to the last practicable moment before dark. Generally, the maximum support was put in the air in the vicinity of 0800 (for planned strikes in coordination with King-Hour preparation fires), and again at 1600 (for the purpose of providing maximum neutralization during the period of consolidation for the night). The 0800 strikes were of marked benefit, but the value of the 1600 strike is questionable. Although probably of value in neutralizing enemy supporting fires, few of these strikes could be delivered sufficiently close to the front line units to neutralize enemy infantry fire. So far as destruction of enemy reserves moving to counterattack is concerned, by Dog-plus-one this mission was well within the capabilities of other arms. Normal support in the air should be adequate for this purpose. Finally, it is considered that the amount of support in the air during the afternoon hours was reduced because of preparations for putting the maximum effort in the air at 1600.

Liaison with air can still be much improved. In this, as in other operations, the promptness and precision with which called strikes could be delivered fell short of hopes and expectations. The delay appeared to be principally caused by two circumstances: first, the availability of support aircraft, and second, the request procedures in effect during the operation. Generally, during the first week, called strikes were expeditiously delivered; during the later phases, they were often slow in materializing. In some cases, this delay necessitated cancellation of the strike, because of changes in troop dispositions. The request procedures required that strikes called by battalions be forwarded to regiment (and in "Request Procedure Two", from regiment to division) for screening and forwarding to the Commander Air Support Control Unit over the Support Air Request net. This screening process, and the time required for the lower echelons to transmit their requests by wire substantially added to the period of time between the request and the delivery of the strike. It is recommended that called strikes be placed by battalions directly over the SAR net; screening by higher echelons can still be accomplished by monitoring the net.

The accuracy with which strikes are delivered can be increased by organizing and equipping the battalion Air Liaison Parties to serve the same function as the liaison and forward

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observer parties for any other supporting arm. An additional officer, detailed as Air FO, would be able to operate from a forward position from which he could observe the strike, and, by using Very High Frequency equipment, would be able to control the strike from the ground. Control of the strike from the ground is essential to achieve precision; wherever observation from the ground can be obtained, it should be done.

4. SUPPLY.

(a) Shore Party.

(1) Organization.

The RCT 23 Shore Party was constituted as a temporary task unit for the Iwo Jima operation. Its basic element was the 133d Naval Construction Battalion, an organization which had had no previous experience in shore party work, and which had never been exposed to combat conditions. A nucleus of trained personnel were provided by the attachment of Co A, 4th Pioneer Battalion, and a skeleton staff of trained dump personnel were provided from the 4th Service Battalion and the 8th Field Depot. To mold this group into a cohesive unit, and to train it in shore party functions only about six weeks were available. An effective, dependable Shore Party cannot be created in so short a time. That we are still without a solution to the problem is obvious from the experience on Iwo Jima. Temporary organizations requiring the utilization of inexperienced personnel from Naval Construction Battalions continues to prove entirely unsatisfactory.

(2) Beach Parties.

The plan for employment and control of the Beach Parties for this operation was not coordinated by the higher naval and marine echelons. Through misunderstanding of Shore Party organization and doctrine, 'orders from the Transport Squadron Commander deprived the RCT and BLT Shore Party Commanders of command authority over the ships' Beach Parties. This resulted in delay and confusion in landing the rear echelons of Beach

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Parties assigned to the assault BLTs. Operations were further handicapped by the general inexperience and inadequate state of training of the Beach Parties. As a result, casualties to key personnel - with no provision for the assumption of command - left the Beach Party on one of the BLT beaches practically ineffective throughout Dog-day, and necessitated establishment of evacuation and traffic control facilities by RCT organic supply personnel.

(b) Equipment.

On Iwo Jima, the cargo carrier, M29C (Weasel) proved to be of marked value in its ability to negotiate the sandy terrain. It was variously used as a cargo carrier for supplies and equipment, a prime mover for $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trailers and 37mm guns, and a staff and messenger vehicle. In view of its proven utility, it is recommended that five of these vehicles be provided as organic equipment of the regiment, with one being assigned to each battalion, and two to the regimental Headquarters and Service Company.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX ABLE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. PLANNING:

Early in November of 1944 when planning was first initiated for the Iwo Jima operation the personnel shortage was critical. At this time the regiment was short 34 officers and 734 enlisted. The regiment had received 22 officers and 410 enlisted replacements since its return from the Marianas operation. 49 officers and 838 enlisted replacements were received during the month of November and the early part of December. On 5 December, 1944, 16 officer replacements, as platoon commanders, were authorized from the 24th Replacement Draft. Replacement requisitions were submitted to higher echelons on the 4th and 19th of each month. The regiment had been authorized to request 5% over strength. The 5% over strength was never received. The strength of the regiment at the time of embarkation was 145 officers and 3082 enlisted.

On 26 November, 1944, the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion, (less Company "D"), was placed under RCT 23 control for training purposes. However, by Division authority, the Commanding Officer, 4th Pioneer Battalion who was assigned to duty as Division Shore Party Commander assumed responsibility for the detailed training of the Seabees in Shore Party work. The 133rd Naval Construction Battalion (less Company "D"), plus Company "A", 4th Pioneer Battalion, was assigned as the basic element of the RCT shore party. It should be noted that this Seabee organization had had no previous shore party training and many of its men were older than the average combat Marine and consequently less vigorous in physique. Most of its personnel were over 30 years of age; one man was 47.

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ANNEX A-BLE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). CONT.

The 3rd Section, 7th Mar War Dog platoon was assigned to H&S Company on 23 November, 1944, for administrative and tactical control. The section consisted of twenty enlisted men and twelve dogs of which six were scouts and six were messenger dogs.

Discipline during this period of planning and absorption of replacements was very good. Only two serious misconduct cases were brought to the attention of this headquarters, and very few minor cases were reported. It is considered that the morale of the troops at this time was excellent.

The health of the command during the planning period was considered very good, not more than 7% of the command being incapacitated at any one time. The daily sick call ran from 100 to 150.

The regiment at all times maintained a high fighting spirit. Although many replacements were received at a late date the fighting spirit was little affected. The NCOs who had been in combat before took hold of the new men who were anxious to get into combat and further increased the fighting spirit of the command.

The rear echelon of the regiment was selected early and instructed as to their duties. Eight (8) officers and one hundred forty (140) enlisted men were assigned to it. The rear echelon was composed mainly of administrative and supply personnel. It was somewhat larger for this operation than for previous operations as it was anticipated that the base camp would be moved to a forward area.

The RCT was assigned 4 APAs, 1 AKA, 7 LSTs, and 5 LSMs for transportation to the target area. Troops of RCT were assigned to ships as follows:

USS Logan (APA 196) (F)
RCT Hq and RCT Support Gp
USS Newberry (APA 158)
BLT 1, BLT Hq and Support Gp
USS Mifflin (APA 207)
BLT 2, BLT Hq and Support Gp

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

- USS Lowndes (APA 154)
 - BLT 3
- USS Leo (AKA 60)
 - Elements of RCT Support Gp
- LST 716
 - BLT 1 Assault Troops
- LST 723
 - BLT 1 Assault Troops
- LST 642
 - BLT 1 Assault Troops
- LST 812
 - BLT 2 Assault Troops
- LST 761
 - BLT 2 Assault Troops
- LST 587
 - BLT 2 Assault Troops
- LST 930
 - Elements 2d Armd Amph Bn.
- LSM 206
 - BLT 1 SP Personnel and equipment
- LSM 202
 - BLT 2 SP Personnel and equipment
- LSM 126
 - BLT 1 and BLT 2 MdTanks and Pers
- LSM 166
 - BLT 1 and BLT 2 MdTanks and Pers
- LSM 211
 - BLT 1 MdTanks and Pers

All personnel who were to handle embarkation and casualties were instructed in the procedure outlined in various Regimental SOP's.

The following was the effective strength of units of the RCT:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
H&S Co, 23d Mar	35	211
R/W Co, 23d Mar	8	189
1st Bn, 23d Mar	39	874

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ANNEX A TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
2nd Bn, 23d Mar	36	878
3rd Bn, 23d Mar	40	872
Total Regiment	158	3024
3d Band Sec	0	27
Co C, 4th Tk Bn	8	155
Co C, 4th Engr Bn	6	167
Co C, 4th MT Bn	4	76
Co C, 4th Med Bn	7	87
133d NC Bn (less Co E)	25	763
3d Plat, 4th MP Co	1	23
3d Plat, 4th Serv & Sup Co, 4th Serv Bn	1	58
Det, 1st JASCO	15	137
10th Amph Trac Bn	25	407
Co B, 2d Armd Amph Bn	6	147
3d Sec, 7th Mar War Dog Plat	0	20
Det, 8th F Dep	2	6
24th Repl Draft (less Co E)	17	895
3d Plat Army Port Co	1	73
2d Sec, 1st Prov Rocket Det	1	23
Ln & FC Parties, 2d Bn, 14th Mar	7	50
Div TQM	1	5
Det, 4th Ord Co	0	10
Co A, 4th Pion Bn	10	189
Total RCT	295	6342

It should be noted that the above is the strength at the time of landing on Iwo Jima. T/O strength was used for planning purposes. Above figures are all less rear echelon and included both Marine Corps and Naval personnel.

2. EMBARKATION:

Embarkation plan and detail assignment of personnel to advance parties was issued early and all units had adequate time to make plans. Advance parties and loading detail were sent to the ships

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

upon their arrival at the loading point. The advance party had about two days to prepare the ships to receive troops prior to arrival of troops. The advance party was composed of billeting details, cooks and messmen. Embarkation was completed on 17 January, 1945, without encountering any difficulties:

3. RECREATION AND MORALE:

During the period 19-25 January, 1945, recreation was provided for the troops at Pearl Harbor. Personnel embarked in APAs and AKA used Richardson Field. Personnel embarked on LSTs used Nimitz Beach during the period 19-23 January, 1945. Richardson Field had swimming pools, base ball, basket ball and foot ball courts. Beer and sandwiches were purchased through recreation funds.

The field was open from 0800 to 1600 daily. Twenty-five percent of the personnel from each APA and AKA was permitted to go on liberty daily and in addition twenty-five percent was permitted to go on organized recreation. Ships small boats were used for transportation to and from the field. The recreation at Richardson Field was considered excellent, the only complaint being the crowded conditions. The beer and sandwiches were plentiful. On the other hand the recreation for the LST personnel was poorly organized. First of all small boats could not be secured in the Walker Bay area to transport the troops ashore. Then when the troops got ashore, no transportation was available to Nimitz Beach. Many of the troops never got to Nimitz Beach due to the transportation difficulties. The LST personnel were authorized fifty percent of personnel to go on liberty daily and an additional forty percent to engage in organized recreation.

The value of recreation during rehabilitation periods can not be over stressed. It is conducive to morale and to the fighting spirit of a command. Every effort should be made by higher echelons to make the recreation parties a success. The Chaplains and Red Cross Representative secured a large number of small games and books which were of great value after leaving Pearl Harbor.

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ANNEX A TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

A total of thirteen enlisted men were sick and evacuated from the ships to hospitals ashore in Pearl Harbor. No troops were reported lost in route to the target.

No change in morale, discipline, health, and fighting spirit was experienced during this period.

4. OPERATION:

The S-1 section was composed of one officer and sixteen enlisted. Due to the shortage of officer personnel a Sergeant Major was assigned duties as Assistant S-1 (personnel). He was assigned two enlisted to assist in preparation of personnel reports and maintaining personnel records. A second Sergeant Major assisted S-1 in submitting required reports and coordinating the work of the S-1 section. The RCT Commander was assigned a personnel clerk who took messages and orders in shorthand. This clerk also kept a record of all oral messages transmitted by the RCT Commander. One enlisted was assigned to S-2 and S-3 as clerical assistant. Two enlisted men were assigned duties as Unit Journal clerks. The remainder of enlisted men were used as messengers in the Command Post.

The S-1 section landed on Iwo Jima at 1545 on D-day. The personnel were in four boats. Each boat had four enlisted men to the boat. The S-1 section landed with two portable typewriters, two casualty card boxes and two drafting cases. The drafting cases were filled with paper and forms to be used in submitting required reports. Upon landing the S-1 went forward with the executive officer on reconnaissance to locate a spot for the Command Post. The Sergeant Major was left on the beach to send all personnel forward. At this time the front lines were about five hundred yards inland and small arms, artillery, and mortar fire was intense on the beach. There wasn't much choice of location as the beach area was flat and offered very little cover. The location decided upon for the Command Post was about four hundred yards from the beach. The S-1 went back to the beach to gather personnel and direct them to the Command Post. The Sergeant Major again was given the job of getting the

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

personnel together and sending them forward to the Command Post. By 1630 the Command Post was completely established. The S-1 section sustained minor casualties in personnel and equipment in landing. The assistant S-1 began to organize his personnel section and to get casualty reports from the BLTs. The S-1 section was completely set up and operating by 1630. Only an estimate of casualties was submitted to higher echelons on 19 February, 1945. The S-1 and the communications officer located and set up the Command Post throughout the remainder of the operation.

The RCT used a simple card system in reporting casualties. This system proved to be very effective. The cards were prepared at the base camp, and submitted to S-1 prior to embarkation. The cards were checked against the embarkation rosters while enroute to the target. Some cards were lost in landing through personnel casualties and through boxes containing cards being destroyed by enemy fire. The first strength report was submitted on D-plus 1. Cards were submitted on D-plus-3, and daily thereafter. Reporting of casualties during this operation was much easier than experienced during previous operations.

Following is the casualties by day suffered by the Regiment beginning with D-plus-1. Only an estimate was submitted on D-day, and the D-day figures are included with the report for D-plus-1.

	KIA		W&E		S&E		W&NE		MLA		Total Cas.	
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E
D-day &												
D-plus-1	13	92	11	385	0	14	3	21	1	143	28	655
D-plus-2	1	10	0	92	0	21	0	23	0	7	5	153
D-plus-3	0	5	1	35	1	18	1	1	0	26	2	85
D-plus-4	1	5	0	24	0	16	0	26	1	6	0	72
D-plus-5	0	4	1	30	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	37
D-plus-6	0	16	5	52	0	20	0	4	0	6	5	98
D-plus-7	2	30	6	96	0	53	0	5	0	17	8	201

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ANNEX ABLE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

	KIA		W&E		S&E		W&NE		MIA		Total Cas.	
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E
D-plus-8	0	12	0	57	0	18	0	1	0	14	0	102
D-plus-9	0	27	11	129	0	22	2	16	0	17	13	211
D-plus-10	0	0	0	24	0	10	1	4	0	6	1	44
D-plus-11	0	7	1	38	0	13	0	2	0	9	1	69
D-plus-12	0	21	1	88	0	13	1	2	0	2	2	126
D-plus-13	0	26	1	42	0	19	0	2	0	5	1	94
D-plus-14	1	2	0	20	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	24
D-plus-15	1	13	3	80	0	15	1	2	0	3	5	107
D-plus-16	1	15	3	97	0	19	0	1	0	12	4	144
D-plus-17	0	8	3	70	3	5	0	1	0	10	6	94
D-plus-18	0	15	1	16	1	23	0	1	0	0	2	55
D-plus-19	0	15	0	25	0	10	0	2	0	7	0	58
D-plus-20	0	7	1	19	0	6	0	1	0	0	1	33
D-plus-21	1	3	0	14	0	3	0	2	0	1	1	23
D-plus-22	0	6	0	7	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	17
D-plus-23	0	5	0	7	1	3	0	1	0	0	1	16

The last daily report was submitted on 15 March, 1945. The total casualties to date are as follows:

KIA		W&E		S&E		W&NE		MIA		Total Cas	
O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E
24	447	52	1364	6	343	22	234	0	7	104	2396

Over 26% of the officers and over 22% of the enlisted who became battle casualties were killed in action or died of wounds.

Initially 151 enlisted men were carried as missing in action but as hospital lists became available and grave registration began to function all were located except the 7 enlisted now carried as missing in action.

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ANNEX ABL TO REG 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

During the operation 11 officers and 727 enlisted replacements were received by the Regiment. They were assigned as follows:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
S&S Co, 23d Mar	0	4
R/W Co, 23d Mar	0	19
1st Bn, 23d Mar	7	243
2nd Bn, 23d Mar	2	181
3rd Bn, 23d Mar	2	280
Total	11	727

10 officers and 221 enlisted returned to duty from S&E, and W&E.

No civilians were encountered.

Morale at the beginning of the operation was excellent despite the fact that the troops had spent 50 days aboard ship. During the course of the operation, morale was naturally diminished by the high casualty rate especially among leaders, battle fatigue, and difficulty in assimilating replacements short periods of time before attacks were scheduled to jump off, but was still considered good at the end of the operation.

The Military Police were employed initially as dump guards, traffic control, and to establish a straggler line on the beach. As the advance progressed they were used for traffic control around Airfield No 1 and No 2 and to establish straggler lines. The Military Police remained attached throughout the operation.

The Regimental Chaplain held services when practical for all units in rear areas. Most of the men were very anxious to attend Church services. Post exchange supplies were plentiful and were distributed daily with the rations. Mail service was satisfactory at all times. Mail was received at all staging

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ANNEX ABBLE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

points after departure from Pearl Harbor. Mail was received on Iwo Jima on D-plus-5, and frequently thereafter.

The warning order for reembarkation was received on 12 March, 1945. The RCT was assigned the USS Kingsbury (APA 177) and the USS Rockbridge (APA 228) for transportation to the base camp. On the same date reembarkation orders and advance party orders were issued by this headquarters. On 15 March, 1945, the advance parties were sent to the ships and most equipment loaded. On 16 March, 1945, all troops reembarked.

RECOMMENDATION.

It is recommended that battle replacements be trained with units to which they are going to be assigned. A good plan would be to assign them to units for intensive training throughout the entire period of preparation for an operation and then withdraw them just prior to embarkation. The personnel that are withdrawn could be used as ship platoons or in the SP until they are needed as replacements. This would give the replacements ample training and acquaint them with their leaders.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX BAKER TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

INTELLIGENCE

1. MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND SUPPLEMENTARY INTELLIGENCE:

(a) Maps: The maps furnished for planning and instruction prior to the operation were entirely adequate. Maps of all important types were received early enough in the planning phase to give a thorough knowledge of the terrain to the planners. The great quantities of the special Air and Gunnery Target Maps, scales 1/5,000, 1/10,000, and 1/20,000 appeared to be sufficient although lower echelons have requested even greater distribution of such maps so that more NCO's may be equipped with them. (70 1/10,000 and 40 1/20,000 per battalion). The beach maps, assault maps, individual landing sheets and beach diagrams were invaluable.

Several types of maps appeared to have very limited usefulness. Among them were the following types: 2" equals 1 nautical mile, and G-2 Situation Map, scale 1/15,000. The G-2 Study was of limited value. The profiles while undoubtedly accurate, did not give the impression of the steepness of the slope, nor did the drawings portray accurately the terrain inland. The C-2 Study while giving valuable information for identifications, and weapons, was too general in nature to be of much value to the assault personnel.

During the operation, the official Air and Gunnery Target Map, scale 1/10,000, and especially the Situation Map of 11 February proved adequate. Neither map was as accurate as had been expected concerning the terrain north of Airfield #1. This was due to the 20' contour interval which could not show the many small cliffs and ridges, and the inaccurate designation of roads both as to state of improvement and actual location. These inaccuracies made it extremely difficult to make accurate locations on the ground.

The reproduced captured maps, as always, provided

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

helpful supplementary information as to actual ground formations and locations.

(b) Photographs: Though there were quantities of aerial photographs available during the planning and briefing stages of the operation, the quality of these pictures left much to be desired. Lower echelons benefit more from many sets of a few good sorties than from a few sets of many sorties, the majority of which are cloud covered, and of varying and too small scales.

The enlarged obliques of the beaches proved their worth many times over, and similar enlargements of obliques of inland areas would also have been helpful. The photo mosaics received, particularly those of the complete island, scales 1/10,000, and 1/20,000, were almost useless.

During the operation, the obliques and verticals received served a fundamental use in supplementing the inaccuracies or omissions of the maps. Sufficient copies were received in most cases to allow for wide distribution. The practice of designating RJ's and other key terrain features on such photos by annotation should be continued. It is felt that even better photos with larger scale and clearer detail should have been made. Particularly desirable were obliques in the direction of the attack.

(c) Hydrographic Information: The hydrographic information received was timely and extremely useful. It is hoped that even closer reconnaissance may be carried out on future objectives so that routes ashore and part way inland may be picked for tanks and vehicles, etc, prior to How-Hour.

(d) Other Intelligence: The rapid and efficient dissemination of information and material by the D-2 Section in the planning, briefing, and combat stages of the operation were of great assistance to the RCT.

2. INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONING:

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RCT 25 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

(a) General: The R-2 Section was set up in the following manner for the operation: A detachment of two scouts, an enlisted interpreter, and a combat correspondent was attached to each assault BLT for the landing. Two additional scouts were attached to the reserve BLT. The OP team under the direction of the assistant R-2, as one group landed with the forward echelon of the RCT, in addition to another group consisting of the other assistant R-2, a language officer, Section Chief, the clerk and a scout, and 2 photographers. R-2 with a language officer, the draftsman, and two scouts came ashore with the Commanding Officer.

The scouts with the BLT's operated from the BLT CP's daily, accompanying the BLT commanders on their reconnaissances, visiting the BLT OP's, examining installations and gathering information of intelligence and operational importance. Each evening about 1600 one would return to the RCT CP with their combined report of the activities in the BLT zone for the period. Also, the scouts would bring in the Bn-2 reports, and any documents or material secured by the BLT.

The interpreters with the assault BLT's made hasty preliminary interrogations of POW's; evaluated into two groups (immediate use and future use) all documents captured, and were available to help call out surrounded Japanese.

The combat correspondents gathered information for stories and news, wrote up their articles and sent or brought them back to the RCT or Division CP.

The OP team established and maintained a Regimental OP throughout the operation. For the first two weeks ashore, there was always an R-2 officer at the OP. However when casualties reduced the number of available officers, towards the end of the operation, the OP functioned satisfactorily under the direction of the OP Chief.

The R-2 Section of the CP was manned by one R-2 Officer, a draftsman, a clerk, and a language officer. These personnel kept the situation Map, the journal, and a watch

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

on the Air Observers net, the OP net and the phone. In addition, the Language Officer evaluated all documents and material for identifications, and maps and orders concerning the island.

The second language officer, the Section Chief, and three scouts were available to go on Intelligence patrols, to replace casualties in the BLT's, to pick up POW's and to run the 2 Section part of the CP.

The photographers operated out of the RCT CP daily covering all parts of the RCT zone.

Previous experience had shown that it would be necessary to replace scouts and observers and Bn personnel in a long or hard operation. Although only two R-2 personnel, a photographer and a scout with a BLT were wounded on IWO JIMA, by the final stage of the operation, R-2 and one language officer with two enlisted manned the CP, and four men, the OP. All other personnel, officers and enlisted, were replacing casualties in Bn-2 Sections or acting as Liaison Officers. One assistant R-2 was assigned in emergency as a rifle company commander.

(b) Collection of Information: Intelligence and operational information was collected through Intelligence personnel, troops, and other agencies. Prior training of all personnel in the RCT proved extremely valuable in that much information, particularly intelligence information, was reported directly from the assault units which might otherwise have remained unknown. The Regimental Observation Post was manned throughout daylight hours. The RBZ and remote controlled SCR 608 on the Air Net proved extremely valuable.

(c) Evaluation and dissemination of Information: Little evaluation of information was possible in the BLT or RCT echelons on IWO JIMA. Such information as was available was disseminated rapidly. In most cases liaison between Bn's was close enough to insure that information passed from one Bn directly to its adjacent Bns before R-2 could disseminate it.

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RCT 23 OPERATIONAL REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

The D-2 and C-2 Periodic Reports proved valuable to all units in the RCT, and the Interrogation Reports and translations were likewise much in demand.

(d) Communications: Short distances and experience helped to make communications extremely efficient throughout the operation. The OP utilized the SCR 300 and the SCR 610, supplemented when possible by wire. Communications with the OP were good throughout the operation.

The RBZ was used initially on the Air Observers net and when radio jeeps became available, a remote control 608 was used. Both proved satisfactory.

The Intelligence Net on the SCR 300 failed to operate successfully on Dog-day as far as this RCT was concerned. However, it is believed that there should be a Division Intelligence Net. If intelligence information is to be most rapidly forwarded and disseminated, this net should utilize the SCR 300 or some similar set and include Bn-2's of assault Bn's.

(e) Liaison: Liaison between D-2 and R-2, and R-2 and Bn-2's was excellent throughout this operation. The daily visits of D-2 personnel were of aid in the forwarding of much material and in the dissemination of much information.

All permanently attached language personnel due to previous experience in combat and training with this organization, were entirely qualified in their duties. Those language personnel from the D-2 Section and JICPOA who were temporarily working with the regiment were of much assistance and cooperated to the fullest extent.

Bn-2's have suggested, and R-2 agrees, that if D-2 representatives could visit Bn CP's daily it would create closer contact and would give the D-2 personnel a clearer picture of the front lines, the terrain, and Bn 2 problems.

(f) Training and Use of Personnel: The training of all

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

Intelligence personnel in the regiment prior to this operation was directed towards an operation similar to those against Saipan and Tinian. Although there was little patrolling, and distances were much shorter on IWO JIMA, the stress in training on map and aerial photograph reading, knowledge of Japanese equipment and uses, and the close liaison between all Intelligence Sections worked out excellently. This operation was not one in which OP's could function well because of the limited observation from any one point. The inadvisability of patrolling likewise limited another normal use of Intelligence personnel. In general, all regular personnel were used to secure both operational and intelligence information on a restricted scale, to accompany search parties and mop-up patrols, and were extremely valuable in aiding unit commanders in map reading for locations. The language personnel, worked more efficiently than ever previously in the rapid evaluation of captured documents, material, and the interrogation of prisoners.

(g) Use of War Dogs: The War Dog Detachment assigned to this regiment was utilized in front line listening posts during critical periods, and with anti-sniper patrols in rear areas. Outstanding operation of wire and radio communications precluded the extensive use of messenger dogs. The German shepard breed proved superior in cave reconnaissance and scouting of fortified positions and caves. Despite their limited use on IWO JIMA, the potential value of War Dogs is unquestionable.

3. PRISONERS: It was unnecessary to establish a Regimental POW Stockade on IWO JIMA because few POW's were captured, and rapid evacuation was possible either to the ships or the Division. Enlisted interpreters were attached to the assault Bn's to handle preliminary interrogation on the spot. Upon notification, an officer interpreter was dispatched to the scene to complete this work and get the POW to the Division. This system worked very satisfactorily although Bn's report that even better results could be obtained if interpreters were available in each company.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

4. CAPTURED DOCUMENTS AND MATERIAL: Prior indoctrination of troops regarding the handling of documents and material proved extremely worthwhile. All documents, and the movable material were turned in to Bn-2's and R-2 as secured. The troops are to be especially commended for their cooperation.

The enlisted interpreters in the assault Bn's made hasty evaluation insofar as possible of all documents and rushed those of immediate importance back to R-2. The balance of the material was forwarded to the RCT CP via Message Center runners, and scouts. The language officers were able to pick up identifications, and in some cases pick out valuable maps and orders from the mass of documents which were turned in. This system worked well enough so that in most cases documents of any significance were in the hands of the D-2 Section within an hour after they had been secured.

5. PROPAGANDA: Written propaganda, as always, proved ineffective until the final stages of the operation in the RCT zone. Enemy security measures were probably responsible for this. In at least one case, surrender leaflets were dropped on the Second Battalion CP, some 500 yards in rear of the front lines. It is felt that more accurate dropping is possible and that the RCT should be notified in advance that leaflets are to be dropped.

Vocal propaganda was effective in several cases, especially when supplemented by the efforts of previously captured POW's. The majority of surrounded Japanese, however, refused to surrender, and had to be exterminated. There was little opportunity to use the loud speakers.

6. COUNTER INTELLIGENCE: Preliminary planning was carried out at the Base Camp in a large room which was kept adequately secured. This allowed plenty of space for spreading out maps, photographs and other material to work on them. The mass of material available could be easily sorted and wrapped and distributed. Aboard ship, the R-2 Section used an office for the remainder of its study of terrain and photographs.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

7. **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** The system set up for the forwarding of stories and pictures from Regimental Combat Correspondents to higher headquarters was handled more efficiently and rapidly than ever before. The Combat Correspondents of this regiment performed their duties in an excellent fashion.

8. **THE ENEMY:**

(a) **Organization:** The following units were identified in the RCT zone of action, from prisoners, dog-tags, captured maps, and documents:

Rapid Fire Gun Unit (anti-boat), Naval Guard Force.
313th Independent Infantry Battalion, (2nd Mixed Brigade).
310th Independent Infantry Battalion, (2nd Mixed Brigade).
1st Regimental Gun Co.
15th Fortress Engineer Co.
2nd Independent Machine Gun Battalion.
8th AT Bn. (Elements of Awatsu Buttai).
309th Independent Infantry Battalion, (2nd Mixed Brigade).
Ogasawara Army Group (HQ personnel).
11th AT Battalion.
Air Base personnel, Airfield No 2.
314th Independent Infantry Battalion, (2nd Mixed Brigade).
2nd Mixed Brigade Field Hospital.
Special Naval Landing Force.
145th Independent Infantry Regiment.
Maekawa Engineer Unit. (2nd Mixed Brigade).

NOTE: This list was compiled from the R-2 Journal and shows the units identified in succession as far as is possible. It was impossible to determine in many cases whether the whole unit was in the zone or not.

(b) **Tactics:** The tactics employed by the Japanese on IWO JIMA differed considerably from those encountered on any previous operation by this organization. The enemy's mission was apparently (a) to deny our forces a landing; (b) failing in that, to deny our forces the use of the Airfields as long as possible; and (c) to make our occupation as costly as

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD

possible. The following factors aided the enemy in performing his missions: naturally defensive terrain, limited landing beaches and a small land area, a large and well equipped garrison and early knowledge of a probable hostile landing.

The enemy bitterly contested our landings, but it was soon apparent that he would make no banzai counterattacks as long as he retained organization. POW interrogations and translated documents bore out that conclusion.

The enemy held commanding ground for almost two weeks from which he had perfect observation of our activities. His defenses were extremely well organized and strong. His artillery, mortars and rockets were extraordinarily well emplaced, and difficult to locate and destroy. His mastery of the art of camouflage and concealment were demonstrated in every position.

Enemy tanks were utilized as mobile pillboxes, causing much damage to our tanks. They were fired from revetted positions covering tank approaches, and were difficult to locate and destroy. Hasty and also well prepared minefields utilizing mines, explosives and bombs, were found in many places, covered by enemy fire, and denying the use of roads and other areas suitable for tanks.

Even after possession of the commanding ground had passed into our hands, stubborn pockets of resistance, preregistered mortars and rockets, and the extensive cave systems combined to make our continued possession and advance very difficult. The enemy's fanatical defense of the rugged ground east of Airfield #2 was typical of his tactics. His forces were fairly well organized even at that time as evidenced by the counterattack on the night of 8-9 March.

It is worthwhile to note for future operations several items: There were two confirmed reports of the use of Japanese messenger dogs from forward observation posts. Many substantiated reports were received of the enemy using captured equipment and supplies and clothing for surprise purposes.

The use of Japanese rockets is described in paragraph (c) below. Finally, the extensive cave systems found are noteworthy because of the large number of exits provided. The cave in 183 HI was some 400 yards long as far as explored. It was dug into

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the soft rock, complete with bunk and office spaces, equipped with electric lights and all types of supplies. This cave had at least 11 known exits which were blown shut.

The enemy's tactics throughout were defensive in nature. They were well organized and prepared. The heavy pre-landing bombardments and those afterwards did not destroy the enemy's organization. His forces were worn down by continued aggressive action of our troops. These tactics are not new to the Marine Corps, as witness Peleliu, but the manner of carrying them out presages the type of resistance to be expected as we move closer to the Empire.

(c) Equipment: The enemy's mortars and rockets were perhaps of most benefit to him. Our counterbattery, naval gunfire, and bombing destroyed or damaged the great majority of the defender's artillery within a week after the landing. The enemy rockets and mortars, however, continued to be effective to the end of the operation.

The Japanese mortars ranged in calibre as follows: Knee-mortars, 81mm, 150mm, and 320mm spigot mortars. It is also probable that the enemy used 90mm and 120mm mortars, although those weapons were not found in the RCT zone.

The rockets were of three general types: 20cm rocket, bomb thrower rocket (utilizing the 63kg aerial bomb), and the 750 lb rocket. (For report on these rockets see VACLF ltr, re Rocket-Powered Projectiles, preliminary report of, dated 2Mar45).

The mortars, were utilized in the normal manner. Targets had been predetermined and the weapons registered in on them. Without exception every mortar captured had been carefully emplaced and concealed. The emplacements were of several types: Knee-mortars and 81mm mortars were initially used from small pillboxes or even sunken oil drums. Further inland, natural cover, and carefully prepared emplacements with tunnels leading to the rear were utilized. The medium and heavy mortars were set up in emplacements dug into cliffs, in

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concrete positions flush with the ground, and even in caves. Concealment was so good it was almost impossible for ground observers to pick up emplacements even when within 50 feet of them. Firing in many cases was done through an opening 2' in diameter or less, so that it required a direct hit by a heavy mortar or artillery shell to destroy the position.

The rockets are of much interest because they are a comparatively new weapon for the Japanese. Their concussion effect was tremendous. The rockets were fired from specially prepared positions as well as hastily prepared ones. The heavy rocket was not easily moved, but the lighter types were mobile. One type of launcher was a rubber tired two-wheeled cart, and POW's stated other rockets were fired from trucks. The mobility and the natural and artificial cover and concealment employed in the positions used made these weapons as difficult as the mortars to locate and destroy.

Several types of explosives, previously reported from captured documents, were encountered for the first time by this organization on IWO JIMA. These included: plastic mines, shaped charges, and manufactured Molotov "cocktails".

(d) Counterintelligence: The enemy's counterintelligence and security precautions were evident from the start of the operation. As usual few dog-tags were found in comparison to the number of enemy dead. Very few documents or maps of immediate value were recovered until the final stages of the operation. Even post cards, diaries, and other personal items previously found in abundance, were scarce throughout the operation. Examination of the cave system in 183 IJ showed that all valuable equipment, particularly radios, and been methodically destroyed, and all documents either burned or torn up and scattered. While there were quantities of ammunition and other supplies in most caves examined, there were few if any documents or valuable equipment to be found.

(e) Civilians: No civilians were found in the RCT zone.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS:

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(a) Maps: It is recommended that:

(1) A map similar to the G-2 Situation Map, scale 1/10,000, 11 February, 1945, be disseminated in quantity just prior to every operation.

(2) The official map for an operation, if of a 1/5000, or 1/10,000 scale, have a 10' contour interval for greater accuracy in locating ridge lines and other terrain features.

(3) The designation of types and actual locations of roads, the primary keys to locations in terrain like that of IWO JIMA, be more accurate.

(b) Photographs: It is recommended that:

(1) Many sets of a few good sorties, rather than a few sets of many sorties, be disseminated to each RCT.

(2) Low obliques in the direction of the attack and large scale verticals be taken and disseminated in quantity during the progress of an operation.

(c) Training: It is recommended that future intelligence training stress the following subjects:

(1) Aerial photograph reading. It is strongly recommended that D-2 run an API school for all Intelligence personnel, officers and enlisted, and as many other officers as possible.

(2) Map making. Experience on the past operation proved that the men best qualified to make pin-point locations on an inaccurate map were those who had done a great deal of road sketching, logical contouring, and map making.

(3) Japanese language: It is strongly recommended that a Regimental Language School of at least 6 weeks duration be instituted to train at least 2 men from each platoon in the rudiments of hasty field interrogation. It is suggested that

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a similar school for officers be considered.

(d) Counterintelligence: It is strongly recommended that:

(1) As much preliminary and advanced planning and dissemination of material be conducted prior to embarkation as possible. This properly done ensures greater security than the same work done aboard ship.

(2) Code names be used on all maps, whether advance copies or normal distribution.

(3) A series of code words or numbers be substituted for shackle code in designating King-hour times because it is often inadvisable or impossible for front line commanders to show lights in order to read the shackle at night when the hour is generally designated.

(4) In no case should the press, military personnel, or any other person or persons be allowed to comment on the success or failure of enemy tactics, following an operation. In warfare of this type the enemy's source of information is the public comments from ourselves as his garrison is destroyed. Any comments which would aid enemy in improving his defensive tactics should be discouraged.

(e) Equipment: It is recommended that:

(1) A Division Intelligence Net utilizing the SCR 300 or a similar set be employed in training and combat, this net to include Bn-2's of assault Bn's as stations.

(2) Duroseal (a map facing similar to acetate) be made a standard item of R-2 and Bn-2 equipment in sufficient quantities to allow wide use particularly prior to an operation. It proved invaluable in the past operation.

(f) War Dogs: It is strongly recommended that a War Dog Detachment be attached to each Regimental Combat Team for future operations.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX CHARLIE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

*OPERATIONS

1. Infantry.

(a) Basic tactics employed.

Iwo Jima was an island fortress. Its defense consisted of a network of pillboxes, blockhouses, and covered emplacements which, well concealed and ruggedly constructed, were carefully sited to obtain maximum advantage from the difficult terrain. The loose soft sand encountered at the outset, and the broken rocky ridges and draws that lay beyond, were studded with such positions. The narrow roads that extended throughout the island were badly cratered by our own fire and by enemy demolitions, and were extensively mined. In many cases, these obstacles were covered by AT and automatic fire, and, throughout the island, were under small arms and mortar fire.

Against this defense, tactics were limited. Because of the small area of Iwo Jima, its difficult terrain and uniformly strong defense, the attack of the regiment was limited to frontal assault. In general, maneuver was restricted to the smaller units, but some advantage was gained when, after penetration to the center of the island, the assigned direction of attack was twice shifted in order to direct the attack down the terrain corridors against the enemy's final positions.

Due to the interlocking nature of the Jap defenses, it was seldom possible to by-pass any centers of resistance. In the rare cases where this was done, reserve units were employed to reduce them. The reserve units were charged with the responsibility of providing anti-sniper patrols throughout the RCT rear areas, and these were maintained continuously. For the mopping-up during the

*For narrative of operation, see Section IV, basic report.

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final phase, after seizure of the island within its zone, the RCT divided the zone into zones of responsibility. In its assigned zone, each BLT was responsible for destroying all enemy personnel found therein, for burial of Jap dead, and for thorough police of its area. Prior to relief of the RCT within its zone for reembarkation, these missions had been completed.

Mortars were extensively and efficiently used by the enemy, strongly indicating two principal deficiencies in our own mortar equipment. The present heavy shell for the 81MM mortar (M56) repeatedly failed to detonate, and its delayed action prevented effective use against personnel. This shell should be provided with an improved fuse, capable of selection between instantaneous and delayed detonation. Second, the larger caliber mortar so effectively demonstrated by the enemy are lacking in our present organization. To rectify this, it is recommended that a mortar battalion be organized in the Marine Division consisting of two companies of 4.2" chemical mortars (8 to 12 mortars each), and one company of 155MM mortars (6 to 8 mortars). The employment contemplated is that the 4.2" companies would be attached and operated under the assault RCTs, while the 155MM company would operate under division control in the manner of special purpose artillery.

(b) Employment of Regimental Weapons Company.

The characteristics of the terrain and of the defense, already described, severely limited the employment of the weapons of the Regimental Weapons Company in support of the attack. Its wheeled and tracked vehicles were limited to the sketchy network of narrow roads. The high vulnerability of its weapons crews further restricted employment, since the Japanese had excellent observation of the forward areas, and placed accurate and intensive mortar fire on such targets.

The 37mm platoons were attached to the BLTs for the landing and throughout the operation. Losses during the landing were heavy, only 3 guns being in operation on the night of Dog-day. After reorganization, two platoons of 3 guns each were available and were attached to the assault BLTs. Salvaged and repaired

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weapons increased the number of guns to 9 by the end of the operation. Several attempts were made to employ 37mm guns in support of the attack by direct fire into embrasures of pillboxes, covering the advance of the assault teams. These efforts were ineffective, primarily because of the inability to move the guns into positions from which supporting fire could be delivered, the difficult terrain and the heavy enemy mortar fire severely hampering movement.

The 75mm platoon was never employed in support of the attack. Since tracked vehicles were generally limited to roads, tanks were always available to deliver supporting 75mm gunfire from the positions that could be used. Consequently, tanks were employed in preference to the half-tracks, since the latter were extremely vulnerable to the accurate enemy mortar fire. During one two-day period, the 75mm platoon was employed to good effect in supporting the operations to mop up the enemy pocket in Target Area 183 INO.

In defense, the 37mm platoons were sited to cover routes of approach for enemy troops and mechanized equipment, whenever practicable. The 75mm platoon was usually maintained in the vicinity of the RCT CP, prepared to move to the adjacent airfields and taxiways to repel any tank counterattack that might develop.

The primary tactical mission of the Regimental Weapons Company is to provide the command with an adequate tank defense, and to furnish protection against low-level air attack for its most vital installations. To date, there have been few occasions for actual employment in these capacities, while use in close support of the infantry has been usual. In practice both of these types of missions have equal importance, and the following recommendations are based on this premise, which is substantiated by the recent operation.

The 37mm gun now in use should be replaced by the 57mm gun as the principal arm, and an alternate weapon of similar caliber and characteristics, capable of being man-handled, should be provided for the initial stages of the landing attack. If provided

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with an adequate prime mover, the 57mm gun will be able to go into practically all of the firing positions into which the 37mm gun can be placed. In the case of both weapons, the available positions will be severely restricted in terrain of the nature of that encountered on Iwo Jima. Inasmuch as the differences in the ability to employ these two weapons will not be substantially in variance, it is considered that the great difference in destructive power which would be gained by the recommended change outweighs the disadvantages. In addition, by reason of its larger caliber, the 57mm gun should be even more effective than the 37mm in cannister fire against counter-attacking enemy troops.

As on Iwo Jima, there will be many cases where the wheeled gun cannot be effectively employed for troop support, due to difficulties of terrain. Since mechanized attack, both friendly and enemy, is substantially reduced in such areas, the role of the 37mm (or 57mm) gun in close support of the infantry is emphasized. Therefore, an alternate weapon capable of being man-handled in such terrain, particularly during the landing phase, should be provided. The gun should be of 37mm, dismountable into man-loads, and capable of quick re-assembly. It should retain, insofar as practicable, those characteristics of high velocity and flat trajectory possessed by the present 37mm gun, and should be provided with the same types and percentages of ammunition.

The imminent replacement of the 75mm motor carriage M3 with the 105mm M7 is welcomed. Many of the limiting factors of the M3 are overcome by the full-track and heavier armor of the M7. It is, nevertheless, considered that the M10, M10A1, or M18 Motor Carri s would be an even more satisfactory weapon, because all of these possess a high-velocity gun (highly desirable), and offer substantially increased crew protection.

2. Attached Weapons.

(a) Tanks.

Throughout the operation great difficulty was encountered in effectively employing tanks; the combination of loose volcanic

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sand and rocky broken terrain limited their operation to prepared routes. The construction of such routes or the repair of already existing roads was an extremely difficult task due to the enemy's extensive use of mines and his accurate estimate of our capabilities. In most cases, preparation of tank routes was accomplished by dozer tanks. Since dozer equipment (both tank and engineer) was limited, this was necessarily a slow process, and meant that tank support of the assault units was severely hampered. Wherever they could be employed, tanks were of great benefit.

The attached tank company (Co C, 4th Tank Bn) was divided into five tactical units, four tank platoons and a headquarters tank section. When they landed, each of the platoons had three tanks equipped with the 75mm gun, two of them carrying a small dismountable flame-thrower capable of being fired through a machine-gun port as an auxiliary weapon. Two of the four platoons included a fourth tank equipped with a large flame-thrower of 265-gallon capacity, permanently mounted in the turret, and fired through the bore of the affixed 75mm gun. Headquarters tank section consisted of four tanks mounting the 75mm gun, one of which was equipped with a flail, and one with a dozer blade.

Operations with the flame-thrower tanks was highly successful. Their increased range and large volume of flame enabled them to neutralize fortifications beyond the capacity of the smaller flame-throwers. Because of their great utility, more large flame-thrower tanks should be provided, but not at the expense of sacrificing any of the present gun-power of the tank company. At a minimum, one additional flame-thrower tank should be provided in tank company headquarters, for replacement purposes. If additional flame-thrower tanks can be provided, all platoons should have one flame-thrower tank as organic equipment.

The small flame-throwers also proved valuable, despite their limited range and fuel capacity. In order to ensure maximum flexibility in tank employment, and the rapid engagement of suitable targets, all tanks (except the large flame-thrower tanks) should be so equipped.

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The flail tank was not used by the tank company. Because of its excessive weight on the bow of the tank, the flail caused the tank to bog down, and it was jettisoned on Dog-day. The value of this equipment on this operation is questionable, since the bulk of the anti-tank mining was done with heavy aerial bombs. Nevertheless, the flail tank is considered a potentially valuable item of auxiliary equipment, and should be retained. In operations on an objective of larger size, where the enemy will not find the use of bombs in mine-laying so practicable, the flail could be used to great advantage.

The tank dozer was invaluable. As noted above, it was extensively used for clearing routes for tanks; without question, the success of tank employment on Iwo Jima was almost entirely dependent on the operations of the tank dozers. Because of this, it is recommended that one tank in each platoon be equipped with the dozer blade, with the tank dozer now in company headquarters being retained as a replacement.

Two comments with regard to the basic tank should be noted. First, in order to increase its mobility in sandy areas, normally encountered on landing beaches, and on objectives similar to Iwo Jima, the present tank should be modified, or replaced by one mounting a track of substantially increased bearing surface. Second, heavier armor should be provided on the front slope plate and sides of the tank, since the Jap 47mm anti-tank has repeatedly pierced these portions of the present medium tank.

No new or unusual employment of tanks was initiated during this operation. Depending on the availability of tanks, and their ability to take position from which they could support the attack, one or more tank platoons were assigned to BLTs engaged in the assault or in mopping-up operations. Normally, these tanks were further attached to front-line companies, and tank-infantry coordination was effected by the infantry company commander in liaison with the tank platoon leader. Liaison for the purpose of coordination and control of tank-infantry operations in all higher echelons of the RCT was effected through liaison officers assigned from the attached tank company to the unit headquarters. The tank

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company executive officer was present at the RCT headquarters during the entire period of attachment; similarly, liaison officers from the tank company were maintained at BLT headquarters whenever a tank unit was attached to the BLT.

Experience gained during the landing phase confirms the proposition that, except where the conditions of the beach and of the land area immediately inland are known to be favorable to the movement of tanks, tanks should not be landed on a pre-arranged schedule. Careful reconnaissance by trained tank reconnaissance teams, operating in coordination with the infantry commanders ashore, is necessary to determine the landing points and routes inland to the areas where it is intended to employ the tanks. Since this will require an appreciable interval of time, varying in accordance with the difficulties encountered, it is clear that adhering to a rigid time schedule may jeopardize the success of subsequent tank operations.

A corollary implied by the foregoing, and substantiated by recent experience, is that adequate tank reconnaissance teams should be available to perform these missions, and subsequent reconnaissance in forward areas. Such personnel require special training; it therefore follows that, although no provision has been made in the T/O for the Tank Battalion for such personnel, they should be provided for in these organizations. Normal employment would require sixteen men per tank company. Based on normal infantry employment, this would provide two 4-man teams on each BLT beach, and one 4-man unit to each assault rifle company during the later phases. Coordination of the teams could be accomplished by the tank liaison officer with the BLT.

Difficulties in tank-infantry coordination arose from communication deficiencies. During the early stages of the operation, tanks operating with the assault units were continually under intensive mortar fire. This effectively prevented use by the infantry officers of the telephone handset attached to the rear of the tank. The handset should be equipped with a self-winding reel for assault wire, of at least 100-foot capacity, in order to permit infantry personnel to take cover, and to

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ensure for them some freedom of movement while so doing. Further, the telephone should be equipped with a device which would permit personnel within the tank to drop the phone in the vicinity of a covered position, while the tank itself pulled away. This would minimize exposure of infantry personnel during periods of heavy fire. The SCR 300's provided in platoon leaders' tanks as an auxiliary means of communications with infantry company commanders were useful, but their efficiency was hampered by the frequent casualties to these tanks. All tanks should be so equipped.

(b) Rockets.

Throughout the operation, except when the RCT was in reserve, one section of the 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment was attached. Normally, the section of six 1-ton launcher-equipped trucks was retained under RCT control in a covered position in the vicinity of the RCT CP, prepared to move to a nearby firing position to execute assigned missions, as requested by BLT Commanders. In a few cases, the section was attached to an assault BLT when suitable firing positions were limited to that BLT zone. Normally, the firing missions assigned were to thicken pre-King-hour preparations, or to fire concentrations on definitely located centers of resistance. Since the rocket trucks could not be retained in firing positions because of their vulnerability to enemy mortar fire, they were limited in engaging targets of opportunity. Nevertheless, they were often employed, in all cases as a part of a coordinated plan for advancing the attack.

The effectiveness of the rocket fire varied. The blast effect of the rocket barrage was not sufficient to destroy pill-boxes or other heavy fortifications, but their harassing effect was evidenced by temporary cessation of fire from these areas. In areas where the enemy was more exposed, the effect of the barrage was more pronounced. In one reported case, more than a score of the enemy were observed to evacuate their positions when the first ranging shots fell; the ensuing barrage hit squarely around them, wiping them out.

In the Iwo Jima operation, rockets proved again to be a useful supporting weapon. In a situation where the terrain was

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less favorable to the defense, and where the fortifications were less complete, they would be invaluable.

As is noted throughout this report, one of the chief handicaps encountered was the difficulty in bringing close supporting weapons to bear on the enemy's extensive fortifications. Terrain in such an area indicates that the weapon must be man-handled, while the strength of the positions requires high destructive power, accuracy, and range. For such operations a rocket should be admirably suited. Both the 4.5", and the 7.2" lack the requisite accuracy. A large rocket possessing the characteristics of accuracy and trajectory of the bazooka should be developed, with an effective range of 250 to 300 yards. In order to obtain the desired destructive effect, it should be of 4.5" or 5" caliber, and should incorporate the shaped-charge principle. Finally, the launcher should be sufficiently portable to permit its quick emplacement and operation in the most difficult terrain by a crew of not more than two men.

3. Supporting Arms.

(a) Artillery.

Artillery support throughout the operation was excellent. Infantry-artillery coordination within the RCT was conducted in accordance with current standard operating procedure; results were generally satisfactory, and no modifications are recommended. Close liaison was continuously maintained with the direct support artillery battalion (2/14), and the planning for harassing, interdicting and close defensive fires for the night and for preparation fires preceding King-hour attacks was expeditiously conducted. Except when limited by ammunition shortages, fires delivered in support of this RCT fulfilled all requests.

Because of the nature of the terrain and of the defense, the destructive effect of artillery was limited, but in most cases, its neutralizing effect was appreciable. The effectiveness of night harassing and close defensive fires cannot be doubted; in several instances, enemy groups ~~apparently forming for counterattack~~

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were thoroughly disrupted. Excellent cooperation was shown in the execution of counter-battery fires requested by the RCT, and their neutralizing effect, though temporary, was good.

Two recommendations are submitted for increasing the effectiveness of artillery support. First, on an operation of this nature, where the defense is based upon a system of ruggedly constructed permanent fortifications, divisional artillery has little destructive effect. Accordingly, a greater amount of heavy caliber Corps artillery, capable of breaching pillboxes and similar positions, should be provided. Second, for all subsequent operations, a 105mm illuminating shell should be provided, in order to ensure adequate illumination, to decrease the burden upon supporting illuminating ships, and to permit company commanders to limit their 60MM mortars to emergency use, in order to prevent disclosure of their forward firing positions.

(b) Naval Gunfire.

Liaison and control of supporting naval gunfire was uniformly excellent throughout the operation. The only deviation from normal procedure was initiated in a situation where accurate deep fire support was desired, and the FOs had no observation to the front. In this case, the regimental naval liaison officer, and the regimental intelligence officer went aboard the direct fire support ship then assigned to the RCT, and conducted fire on targets which they could observe from seaward. The familiarity of these officers with the tactical situation, and their knowledge of the type of targets opposing the advance proved of great benefit, and these operations were considered highly successful.

In line with this success, it is recommended that infantry officers of considerable experience be placed aboard firing ships during both pre-Dog-day and subsequent bombardments, to work in coordination with the ships' gunnery officers. With their knowledge of Jap tactics, and their ability to analyze the terrain, these officers should be of material assistance in the selection of the most important known targets, and in determining the location of probable enemy positions.

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From experience and observations ashore, it is concluded that the pre-Dog-day bombardments of Iwo Jima could have been substantially more effective. The primary purpose of these bombardments should be the destruction of enemy positions and installations. For this purpose, area fire has been shown to be principally effective in revealing targets, by stripping away camouflaging material. It should then be followed by direct fire on identified point targets, for destruction. These processes necessarily require more time than was here allowed, to ensure a thorough job. It is estimated that ten days should be allowed for an objective like Iwo Jima. Further, since most of the larger fortifications on Iwo Jima were of very rugged construction, a larger proportion of 12", 14" and 16" shells should have been allotted, in order to ensure complete destruction of such positions.

The special purpose LCI's provided for the operation were valuable auxiliary weapons. The success of the employment of the rocket LCI's was lessened by thoroughness of the enemy's preparations of fortified positions; nevertheless, it is regretted that more were not available. The mortar LCI's were principally used for intensive night harassing fires. While it is not possible to directly determine their effectiveness, information is sufficient to warrant their use in the future.

(c) Air Support.

So far as the pre-Dog-day air bombardment is concerned, much of the comment made concerning naval bombardments during this period also applies to air. To be of maximum value to the infantry, pre-Dog-day air bombing must destroy, not neutralize. Greater emphasis must be placed on pin-pointing targets; bombs of 1000-lb size, and larger, must be used.

While it is realized that many considerations affect the amount and nature of air support over a target situated like Iwo Jima, certain comments can be made. During the early part of the operation, and during the last phase, the availability of air support was generally good; however, after departure of the supporting fast carrier forces, and prior to the availability of Army air

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units on the island, prompt air support was impossible to obtain. Possibly due to this factor, the speed with which air strikes were delivered varied from time to time. Generally, during the first week, strikes were expeditiously delivered; during the later phases, strikes were often slow in materializing. In some cases, where such requests were for close support, this delay necessitated cancellation of the strike, because of changes in troop dispositions.

As to the nature of the support, dive-bombing provided by naval aircraft was not executed at a sufficiently low level. Against fortifications like those of Iwo, it is imperative that a high degree of accuracy be attained, both for close and deep support. Aircraft from the fast carrier group, and later, the land-based P-51s, delivered the best strikes, but the TBFs (said to be unsuitable for dive-bombing) delivered their strikes from shallow dives, actually glide-bombing. Increased emphasis must be placed on low-level dives, and aircraft suitable to the task should be available. Generally, in delivery of requested close support strikes, Air Plan Victor (prescribing a minimum altitude of about 1500 feet for aircraft) was set. Unless support aircraft are permitted to deliver strikes regardless of friendly artillery fire within the area, Plan Negat (stopping all friendly fire in the area) should be more freely used. This is not an indictment of this system of coordination of supporting fires. On the contrary, it is recommended that present doctrine in this respect should merely be modified to provide that the condition be set by the infantry officer requesting the strike, and that a statement of the plan desired be considered a necessary part of the request for air support.

Twice during the operation B-24s delivered deep support bombing. It was ineffectual. It was apparent to the ground observer that briefing for the strike was inadequate, since the strike was so far wide of the target and so sketchy as to be classified "haphazard". The idea of deep support bombing by heavy planes is good, but it considered that such bombing will be most effective if carefully planned to supplement the capabilities of air present at the target (for example, the heavy bombers should concentrate on targets requiring very heavy caliber bombs). They should carefully briefed on specific targets by the air coordinator, and

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should be under his operational control while over the target.

Several deficiencies in the types of ammunition employed were evident. Delayed action bombs should have been freely used, to insure maximum penetration into fortified positions and to promote low-level dive-bombing. During much of the operation, these bombs were not available. Second, the bombing with napalm left much to be desired. Failures to ignite were frequent. Although the nature of the weapon demands extreme accuracy and strike delivery from below an altitude of fifty feet (to ensure ignition), napalm strikes were usually delivered from a glide at 500 feet or higher. Finally, it is considered that 11 3/4" rockets should be continually available. The 5" rocket was freely and well employed, but lacked the destructive power to breach the heavier enemy fortifications. Employment of the larger rocket would restrict very little the amount and type of support maintained in the air for call missions; it would usually be fired against only the heaviest positions. Such strikes would normally be planned sufficiently far in advance to permit mounting the strike from the parent carrier by the desired time, since they would be delivered on strong positions developed by the assault units, and would require careful coordination.

With regard to the general time schedule set for air, it is re-affirmed that support for call missions should be over the target as soon as physically possible after daylight, and up to the last practicable moment before dark. Generally, the maximum support was put in the air in the vicinity of 0800 (for planned strikes in coordination with King-Hour preparation fires), and again at 1600 (for the purpose of providing maximum neutralization during the period of consolidation for the night). The 0800 strikes were of marked benefit, but the value of the 1600 strike is questionable. Although probably of value in neutralizing enemy supporting fires, few of these strikes could be delivered sufficiently close to the front line units to neutralize enemy infantry fire. So far as destruction of enemy reserves moving to counterattack is concerned, by Dog-plus-one this mission was well within the capabilities of other arms. Normal support in the air should be adequate for this purpose. Finally, it is considered that the amount of support in

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the air during the afternoon hours was reduced because of preparations for putting the maximum effort in the air at 1600.

Liaison with air can still be much improved. In this, as in other operations, the promptness with which called strikes could be delivered fell short of hopes and expectations. The delay appeared to be principally caused by two circumstances: first, the availability of support aircraft, and second, the request procedures in effect during the operation. The first of these factors has already been discussed. The request procedures required that all requests from the battalion air liaison parties be submitted to higher echelons by some means of communication other than the Support Air Request net except where such other means was not available. Practically, this meant by wire, and the time lost in attempting to get a clear wire under even normal conditions was appreciable. The second feature of the request procedures was that requests were submitted for screening by battalion to regiment (under "Request Procedure One"), or by battalion and regiment to division (under "Request Procedure Two"), before being forwarded to the Commander Air Support Control Unit. With regard to screening, it is recommended that called strikes requested by line battalions be forwarded direct to CASCU. (Called strikes are here differentiated from planned strikes, in that the former are of an urgent nature, for immediate delivery on targets of opportunity, whereas planned strikes are considered to be less urgent from the standpoint of speed of delivery, and are coordinated with the infantry over-all scheme of maneuver). Called strikes will not be excessive in number. Screening can still be obtained by the higher echelons by monitoring the SAR net, and by assigning priorities where such appear to be necessary. Allocation of tactical air units to each line division, with a separate CASCU for each, should further expedite screening. The possibility of jamming the SAR net with requests under such conditions is slight. The operation on Iwo Jima showed that, with good net control, three divisions could successfully use the SAR net with little conflict; assigning an additional SAR frequency would relieve any incipient congestion.

One final phase concerning air liaison should be considered--control of the strike itself. In order to promote accuracy, the

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strike should be controlled from the ground if it can be observed from there. Air liaison parties with the battalion should be organized, equipped and operated to play the same part in control of their arm as that now played by artillery forward observers. To accomplish this, the battalion liaison party should include one officer as FO, and one officer as liaison. Strikes called by or with the approval of the battalion commander would be forwarded and followed through by the air liaison officer. To effectively operate the equipment necessary to do this, the liaison officer normally must be located in the battalion CP. The air FO, however, need only have radio facilities to contact the strike commander, but must maintain a forward position for observation. The FO's maintaining such a position would ensure his familiarity with the situation and the ground. Thus situated, he could effectively assist the air coordinator in the initial briefing of the assigned planes, and could assume control of the supporting craft during the dummy runs and the actual strike.

The general plan of direct ground control of supporting air by air liaison parties was, of course, planned and attempted for the Iwo Jima operation, but two factors mitigated its success. First, as discussed above, was the organization of the battalion air liaison party. Second, although the air liaison parties were equipped with very high frequency equipment, for the purpose of directly contacting support aircraft, they were refused permission to use it. The objection- lack of net control- could and should have been overcome; it could have been controlled by the air coordinator, or an alternate frequency could have been assigned. As a result of this decision, the SAR net was used for instructing supporting craft. This was highly undesirable, since it was slow (it had to be cleared through net control) and therefore ineffective, and it cluttered up the SAR net.

(d) War Dogs.

War dogs were employed principally in supplementing command post defenses, and in assisting anti-sniper patrols and mopping-up detachments in areas containing caves and other concealment. In these capacities, they were very useful. Although they were seldom

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used in front line areas, they were in some cases put to good effect. In this operation, where close contact with the enemy was maintained, they were of less use than they would have been in a more open warfare, or in an area where thick undergrowth and limited observation was more general. They were never employed as messengers, no need for this arising.

(c) Chemical.

Smoke and flame-throwers were the only methods of chemical warfare employed during the operation, by either side. Where used, smoke was employed to screen movements - particularly during effecting reliefs -, to mark targets, and to drive the enemy from caves and other fortified positions. The new types of colored grenades were effective in assisting in identifying front lines, and for pin-pointing targets.

Tank flame-thrower operations have already been discussed. The infantry portable flame-thrower (M2-2) was extensively used in the assault and mopping-up of caves and fortified positions. These operations verified the indispensability of this weapon.

The large number of flame-throwers available (27 per battalion) permitted great elasticity in supply and employment. In the landing, 1 flame-thrower was carried by each rifle platoon, 9 were landed with each battalion supply section, and 27 were landed with the regimental service platoon. This ensured rapid replacement of lost or damaged weapons with ones completely charged and ready to operate. These same supply echelons were maintained ashore. Servicing and repair of flame-throwers was accomplished at the regimental level under the direction of the Ordnance Officer, and resupply was accomplished by the forwarding of charged weapons to battalions, and the return of emptied weapons to the regiment. This system operated with a high degree of efficiency, and speed and elasticity of employment was ensured. It was found, however, that more flame-throwers were available than were required. The allotted number may be reduced by one-third, and this ideal system for re-supply can still continue to function with an adequate margin against loss or destruction of weapons. The allotment should

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not, however, be reduced below 18 per battalion.

4. Miscellaneous.

(a) Functioning of the RCT Operations Section.

The Regimental R-3 section for the Iwo Jima Operation consisted of the following:

- 1 - Major, R-3.
- 1 - Major, Senior Liaison Officer (Assistant R-3).
- 1 - Captain, Assistant R-3.
- 1 - Tech Sergeant, Operations NCO.
- 1 - Cpl, Reconnaissance NCO and Clerk.
- 1 - PFC, Draftsman.

Each officer and enlisted man of the section had a definitely assigned duty of a specific nature for the primary stages of the operation. After the landing phase had been accomplished it was anticipated that normal functioning would be resumed.

The operations section was divided into two echelons to permit flexibility and further to insure that a portion of the section remained available in the event of casualties prior to the landing. The advance echelon of the R-3 section consisting of 1-Major, Assistant R-3, Operations NCO and draftsman were assigned to the RCT Executive Officer as a component of his staff. The balance of the section, Major R-3, Captain, Assistant R-3 and Corporal, Clerk, constituted the rear elements of the section and remained with the RCT Commander. This rear echelon of the operations section accompanied the RCT Commander to the Control Vessel for tactical control of the landing. Functioning aboard the Control Vessel was normal in that the assistant R-3 maintained the situation map while the R-3 remained close by the RCT Commander for the purpose of executing his orders and instructions, in addition to keeping him abreast of the situation and supplying the necessary information as required. It has been determined from the experience of past landings that two operations officers are required aboard the Control Vessel in order to clear the heavy volume of operational

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messages and information during the ship-to-shore phase. A journal clerk from the R-1 section was employed to keep the necessary records of out-going and incoming messages and other pertinent data connected with the landing phase. In the actual landing phase, the Advance Message Center under the RCT Executive Officer landed prior to the RCT Commander for the purpose of establishing the initial RCT CP ashore. In line with this, the advance elements of the R-3 section upon landing immediately instituted action concerning the situation ashore and relayed valuable information to the rear CP aboard the Control Vessel for appropriate action or for relay to higher headquarters.

The functioning of the Operations Section ashore was normal and varied in accordance with the situation. All hands were fully occupied night and day clearing the myriad of operational details and disseminating vital information to lower units and higher echelons.

As a result of casualties in one of the battalion staffs it was necessary to transfer the Major, Assistant R-3 to duty as a battalion operations officer. The remainder of the RCT Operations Section remained intact, with two officers and three enlisted men during the entire operation. Relays were established on a team basis between the officers and men of the section. One officer was always present at the situation map with the RCT Commander for the execution of orders during the progress of an attack. Both day and night during critical phases of the operation, it was often necessary for both officers to be on duty at the map in order to clear vital phone and radio messages and to coordinate the verbal instructions issued to liaison officers of the supporting arms and adjacent units.

At night, after the operation order for the continuation of the attack had been completed and issued, staff officer watches were established using all available officers of the RCT Headquarters for this purpose. This watch system enabled at least one R-3 officer to get sufficient sleep and rest at least for a portion of the night. However, one R-3 officer remained close by to handle urgent details, and if a critical issue developed both officers were on duty.

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According to circumstances, it was frequently possible for one R-3 officer to visit the RCT OP or the battalion CPs to gain additional information from ground observation.

Close coordination and inter-staff relations were insured by frequent conferences held by the R-3 with all staff officers and the Liaison Officers from supporting, attached and adjacent units.

(b) Landing of the RCT Command Echelon.

The plan as established for the landing of the RCT Command Group was based on the idea of maintaining two skeleton staff organizations, each capable of operating in control of the RCT in the event of casualties to the other. On the basis of the above, the RCT Command Group was divided into two operating echelons according to the following:

RCT Rear Command Echelon

RCT Commander.
R-2.
R-3.
R-4.
Assistant R-3.
RCT Comm Off.
Amph Trac Liaison Officer.
Tank Liaison Officer.
11 Enlisted to include radio operators and clerks.

Advance Command Echelon

RCT Executive Officer.
Assistant R-2.
Assistant R-3.
Assistant RCT Comm Off.
Regimental Quartermaster.
8 Enlisted to include radio operators and clerks.

Other essential staff officers and Liaison Officers were boated according to priority of function on the operation. A total of 4 LCV(P)s were utilized by the RCT Headquarters for the landing of staff and liaison personnel. All personnel boated in the RCT Commanders boat boarded the Control Vessel for control of the landing. Other LCV(P)s with priority staff and liaison sections remained boated in the vicinity of the Control Vessel available on call.

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1. HEADQUARTERS, TWENTY-THIRD MARINES,
TNP-cmm FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SUPPLY

1. PLANNING PHASE

The initial planning for the IWO JIMA operation began in October of 1944 when the regiment participated in a map problem issued by the 4th Marine Division. The problem was called Island "X", and it was given the characteristics of IWO JIMA. The S-4 Section made a complete study of the problem, and after an estimate of the supply and evacuation had been made, a complete administrative plan was prepared.

Based on this administrative plan and new information as it became available, the S-4 Section continued forming plans to supply and equip the regiment for a forthcoming operation. As plans were adopted, preparation followed as soon as possible. The S-4 Section obtained training and coordination as a result of this planning and preparation. Preparation did not prove to be difficult as the required supplies and equipment estimated to be needed for the coming operation were obtained within a reasonable time.

2. LOADING PHASE

The loading phase of the operation was efficiently completed. It is believed that this success was the result of the training held before the actual loading began. Four of the five troop TQM's had been to TQM school, and the RCT loading officer held school for the loading officers and a representative from each of the units comprising the RCT, instructing them on the different forms to be used and on the characteristics of the type ship that would be used. Following this instruction the loading officer had all units of the RCT submit the required loading forms from which the loading officers made up tentative loading plans. The ships TQMs were then sent for, and on arrival they gave the loading officer the information as to how the tentative plans would conflict to their respective ships orders and characteristics.

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Having received this information the loading officer then called for a new set of loading forms and had the troop TQMs prepare their final loading plans.

The loading plans were followed in the actual loading of the ships, and loading was rapid. The RCT was allowed 48 hours to load the four APAs assigned to it, however all ships were completely loaded in 32 hours. Four days were given to the loading of the AKA assigned to the RCT. It was loaded in 68 hours. It is believed that all ships could have been loaded in less time had the ship's personnel been more experienced in loading. The APAs were new and the inexperienced crews were slow in operating the ship's loading equipment.

3. REHEARSAL PHASE

During the rehearsal phase the final administrative order for the RCT was completed. It was issued during the rehabilitation period. While the rehearsal was being held the S-4 Section personnel participated in the ship to shore movement and the overnight problem, but did not land any combat equipment other than the required radio equipment. It was requested and approved that equipment not be unloaded for the rehearsal due to the fact that the ships were combat unit loaded for the forthcoming operation and that the training that might have been obtained would not outweigh the possible loss or damage to the equipment and supplies.

4. MOVEMENT TO THE OBJECTIVE PHASE

The first stop enroute to the objective was at Pearl Harbor which had been designated as the rehabilitation area. The S-4 Section made use of this period in the procurement of such equipment and supplies that were short and to replace equipment that would not be serviceable for the duration of the operation. Upon departure the plan was revealed to all personnel and intensive schooling conducted.

At Eniwetok, the D-4 called a conference which was very beneficial to all concerned. At this conference a complete review was made of the logistics of the coming operation. This conference was very successful in the settlement of many details and problems.

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ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

While at Saipan a conference was held by the S-4 to inform the Bn-4s of the latest changes and to review again the administrative plan of the operation. The complete unloading plans for the operation were submitted to the S-4 by the troop TQMs at this time.

During the last phase of the movement to the target the troop TQMs kept a check on the cargo to see that it was secure and would not be damaged by heavy seas. At all stops enroute to the target the motor maintenance section was able to effect necessary maintenance to vehicles. Underway the ordnance section was permitted to test fire such weapons as had been turned in for emergency repairs.

5. OPERATION PHASE

The logistical arrangements for RCT 23 were successful for the operation in that all of the S-4 Section functions were efficiently carried out despite many difficulties. The beach on D-day and several days thereafter was under mortar and artillery fire and as a result the organized shore party and beach party were ineffective during this time. These organizations were completely disrupted and communications on the beach were nil. (For complete details of Shore Party Operations see Appendix No 2, this Annex).

The majority of the small boats that landed on D-day were either destroyed by enemy fire, or beached on the beach due to the surf conditions. During the late afternoon of D-day the Regimental Quartermaster with his section was able to organize a small part of Yellow Beach One to receive supplies. Communications consisted of one telephone line to the RCT CP and a radio, SCR 300, which was utilized for communications with the control vessel and the RCT CP. During the first night the regimental supply section was able to get about 20 LVTs and 12 LCVPs ashore with supplies. One LSM was beached in order to evacuate casualties

On the morning of D plus 1, the Regimental Quartermaster was able to organize the remainder of Yellow Beach One. Although supplies were lost after D-day on the beach due to enemy action and surf conditions, the emergency Shore Party was able to continue the landing of supplies adequate to supply RCT 23 plus RCT 24 and RCT 21, until such time that the Division took control of supply on D plus 6. Up until this time all supplies that were

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ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

landed on Yellow Beaches were sent to the RCT dumps. When division took control of the RCT dumps, the RCT dump moved forward to the area just in rear of the RCT CP and remained in that location for the remainder of the operation, maintaining a level of one days supply in the dump and one days supply in the hands of the troops.

Transporting supplies from the beach dumps to the regimental forward dump and to the battalion dumps proved very difficult owing to the nature of the terrain, and the fact that all roads had been badly damaged by gunfire. Wheeled vehicles were useless until the time that roads could be constructed because they could not negotiate the sandy beaches to the high ground to the air field. The surf conditions on the beach limited the effectiveness of beach matting but inland from the beach it was more successfully used. LVTs were used to haul supplies from the beach. It is believed that without the use of LVTs that the supply system would have been a failure the first few days. The carrier M-29 was very successful in the transportation of supply over the terrain encountered. It was regretted throughout the operation that the Quartermaster section had but one of these vehicles.

Sufficient transportation was always available to maintain unit distribution because only very short hauls were necessary. Vehicles were not used extensively but suffered much abuse due to the following: (1) vehicles bogged down on the beach and were exposed to salt water; (2) they were pulled from the beach through deep sand to higher ground; (3) they had to be driven with chains in four wheel drive which was damaging to the clutches and motors. Eighty percent of the vehicles in this regiment must be replaced. The maintenance section was able to keep all vehicles in operation with the exception of those destroyed by enemy action which were: 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trucks, cargo; 4 1-ton trucks, cargo; 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trucks, RE, and 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trailers. From these unserviceable vehicles, the maintenance section was able to salvage many parts for use in repairing of other vehicles. None of the regimental transportation required any Third or Fourth Echelon maintenance.

The ordnance section was able to supply the required ammunition to the BLTs through the operation with the exception of 81mm mortar HE light and 60mm mortar illuminating ammunition. These two items became very scarce during the latter part of the operation and were pro-rated by Division to the RCTs in accordance with the number of BLTs that were committed to the assault. Through salvage work and resupply from Division the ordnance section was able to furnish sufficient weapons to the BLTs. The number of BAR

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ANNEX DOG TO RCT 25 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

Burial was under Division control. The regimental burial officer began moving our own dead on D plus 2 to collecting points, and continued this procedure throughout the operation. The Division Burial Officer moved the bodies from these points and buried them in the Fourth Division Cemetery. Due to the fact that the Division Burial Officer had only three trucks in which he could transport bodies, he was not able to move them to the cemetery as rapidly as desired. There was no report of any hasty burial of friendly dead within the RCTs zone of action.

Division was also in control of burying enemy dead. However, in the latter phase of the operation, the assault BLTs were ordered to bury the enemy dead within their own zones.

Salvage began on the morning of D plus one on the beach and continued throughout the operation. The BLTs conducted salvage operations whenever the tactical situation permitted. The Regimental Quartermaster sent out a salvage detail each day and obtained excellent results. Due to the nature of the operation, equipment and supplies were scattered all over the island which made salvage an important factor throughout the operation. There was no material captured that could be put to use by the S-4 Section. What little enemy equipment was found had either been destroyed by friendly gunfire or by the enemy in his withdrawal.

There was an adequacy of mounting out supplies for the operation, and also an adequacy of resupply of all classes except class V. Under class V, 81mm mortar HE, light and 60mm mortar illuminating ammunition constituted the only shortage.

The supply of water was adequate. In comparison to other operations, the consumption of water was small due to the coolness of the climate and the fact that troops and vehicles were not required to move for long distances. The water landed initially in painted five gallon cans had a bad taste and it is recommended that this type of container not be used in future operations. Water from this type of container was used for purposes other than drinking as soon as the distillation units were in operation.

Palletized cargo was not too satisfactory because of the nature of the terrain. The weight of this cargo made it very difficult to handle in the deep sand on the beach.

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ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

There were no civilians on Iwo Jima, therefore the civil affairs plan did not have to be executed. Supplies carried for civilians were used to replace supplies lost in action designated for troop personnel.

For the medical report on the Iwo Jima operation, see Appendix No. 1 to this Annex.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior to the next operation the personnel comprising the shore party and any other personnel such as the MP platoon who are to work on the beach must be trained together. Every individual must know his mission and ways to accomplish it. The individuals must know each other, and they must know the officers who are to be on the beach with them. They must be given mental training to accept the battle scenes and conditions around them so that they will continue to work under fire.

The RCT must have control over the shore party activities until the time that the Division comes ashore and assumes control and is able to supply the regiments. The Division Quartermaster should come ashore as soon as possible with his equipment and personnel or increase the Regimental Quartermaster's personnel and equipment.

If the RCT is to control the ship to shore movement of supplies for as long a period as it did in this operation, it must have a logistical radio net consisting of a radio on the beach control vessel, each of the traffic control vessels off the respective BLT beaches, one on the beach, and one located with the S-4.

The new type "C" ration should be used in lieu of the old one. Fruit and fruit juice should come in individual containers similar to the "C" ration container. The 10-in-1 ration should only be issued to the regiments when they are in Division or Corps Reserve. The use of the painted five gallon water cans should be discontinued and galvanized drums should be used in their place for water that is to be used for human consumption.

The motor maintenance section should be provided with a spare parts trailer, a lubrication trailer, a blackout tent, and a cutting and welding outfit. With this equipment this section can do a more efficient job in salvage work and also in 1st and 2nd echelon motor maintenance.

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From the excellent results obtained from the Carrier M-29 during this operation, it is recommended that the regiment should be allotted eight to be issued as follows: 1 per battalion and 2 to the regimental quartermaster. It is also recommended that a 1½-ton truck be provided as follows: 1 to the Regimental Weapons Company, 1 to each battalion, and 3 to the Regimental Quartermaster.

The personnel in the ordnance section should be increased. The unit of fire for mortar ammunition should be increased or the regiment should be permitted to bring the amount that it estimates will be required for a given operation.

The Regimental Quartermaster should be issued sufficient fire fighting equipment to protect his installations.

The officers and crew aboard transport ships be indoctrinated with the fact that their mission is to transport troops, land them on the beach, and supply them during the land phase of the operation.

The extra blanket and clothing per man issued by Division was very satisfactory. It is recommended that this be continued in the future. It is also suggested that the portable shower and laundry units be brought by division to enable personnel in reserve to bathe as well as to have a clean change of clothing before being committed in the assault again.

APPENDIX 1: Medical Report.

APPENDIX 2: Shore Party Report.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

APPENDIX NO 1 TO ANNEX DOG-TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

MEDICAL REPORT

The medical personnel of the 23d Marines was organized according to T.O. strength. The Regimental medical section consisting of 2 medical officers; 1 dental officer; and 14 hospital corpsmen. Each Battalion medical section consisting of 2 medical officers, and 40 hospital corpsmen. RCT 23, for the operation, had attached to it the collecting section of "C" Medical Company, 4th Med Bn. This section comprised 3 collecting section teams, each consisting of 12 hospital corpsmen (two trained as relief ambulance drivers), and 2 regular Marine ambulance drivers.

The Regimental medical section was scheduled to land in "Charlie" wave which contained most of the elements of the Regimental C.P. The medical officers and corpsmen were dispersed in five LCVPs of the wave. Three additional corpsmen from the 3d Battalion (initially in reserve) were temporarily attached to assist in landing portable medical supplies. Five ambulance jeeps of the Regiment, and one accompanying each collecting section team were combat-loaded prior to embarkation at Maui.

"Charlie" wave landed under enemy fire, on the left flank of Yellow Beach 1 at approximately 1530. Some medical supplies were lost due to broaching of LCVPs and ramp failure, but these losses were considered negligible.

There was no evidence of activity on Yellow Beach 1 of the beach or shore party medical sections at the time of "Charlie" wave landing.

Care of casualties in the beach area was begun under the supervision of the Regimental Surgeon; also salvage of available medical equipment. Management of casualties was greatly facilitated by the Regimental Quartermaster who, having assumed charge of the beach, provided and supervised personnel engaged in collecting casualties, and salvaging

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

medical equipment. He also constructed a temporary shelter for an evacuation station on the beach. Collecting of non-walking casualties was considerably hampered due to a shortage of stretchers, but ponchos and blankets were used as an emergency measure. Evacuation of casualties from the beach, on the afternoon of D-day was poor due to the scarcity of boats landing, and, having landed the uncertainty of their being able to retract from the beach. On several occasions casualties had to be removed from broaching boats. The excessive handling and immersion contributed to shock. The last evacuation from Yellow Beach 1 was approximately 1730 D-day; this was because no boats were landing. Casualties accumulated until approximately 0200 D-plus-1 day at which time an LSM, arranged for by the Regimental Quartermaster, was beached to pick them up.

By 0900 D-plus-1 day, availability of boats began to ease the beach evacuation problem. All types of craft, landing supplies, took casualties off the beach. The same morning, 10 corpsmen from D and E Medical Companies reported to the evacuation station, and near noon the alternate beach party medical section from the APA 196 was landed. This provided adequate personnel to man the station, and their supplies were valuable in providing needed equipment for the battalions. These supplies were carried to the Battalion Aid Stations by the returning collecting section stretcher teams who had brought casualties to the beach. As in previous operations the critical shortage during the early phase was stretchers. This item cannot be carried ashore in sufficient quantity to meet the requirements on D-day, by the personnel of the Battalion or Regimental Aid Stations in the assault waves. Adequate resupply is dependent upon the efficiency of the shore party and beach party medical sections.

On the morning of D-plus-2 day, evacuation of casualties from the Battalions was improved by using trucks and tractors on their return trips from the Regimental dump area. Litter casualties, from the Battalions, still had to be carried by hand to this point. On the afternoon of the same day, three ambulance jeeps were landed, and two could be used, in a limited status, by the 3d Battalion for evacuat-

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ing casualties. Pre-loaded supplies were valuable.

Also on D-plus-2 day, the hospital section of "C" Med Co was landed. They established an evacuation station on Yellow Beach 2, and reinforced the one on Yellow Beach 1.

Beginning with D-plus-3 day, evacuation of casualties by ambulance jeep from the Battalions improved considerably. The majority of casualties from RCT 23 were carried to the Yellow Beaches until such time as routes of evacuation became more direct through Blue Beach 1.

Essential supplies were available in adequate quantities from D-plus-3 day on, and were supplied directly to the Battalion Aid Stations from beach dumps at the evacuation stations. Cooperation of the evacuation stations was excellent. The only critical item encountered was medical bandage.

By the time the Division Hospital was established (approximately D-plus-10) evacuation of casualties had reached the highest efficiency attainable under the circumstances. Transportation was adequate; routes of evacuation were short and direct; and due to prompt action by Battalion and Collecting Section medical personnel, many casualties occurring in the front lines were in the hospital within 20 minutes to one hour after being wounded.

Two additional ambulance jeeps, obtained from E Med Co on D-plus-6 day were replaced by two from C Med Co on D-plus-9 day, and were maintained under Regimental control throughout the rest of the operation. Since there was occasional mechanical failures, and time required for periodic servicing of vehicles, this greatly facilitated transportation. The cooperation and work of the drivers was excellent.

The casualty rate among hospital corpsmen exceeded 50% during the entire operation; the highest rate occurring among the company aid men. These men were replaced from parent aid station personnel; collecting section personnel of "C" Med Co;

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

and temporary replacements from the 4th Med Bn. On the afternoon of D-plus-3 day, five replacements were requested by the 3d Battalion. These men were furnished from D and E Med Co's. They were returned to parent control on D-plus-4 or 5 day. During the remainder of the operation, similar requests for replacements were furnished from J Med Co and 4th Med Bn as follows: 1st Bn - 6; 2d Bn - 5; 3d Bn - 6. These replacements were requested through the Division Surgeon.

Other than early evacuation direct from Yellow Beach 1, as mentioned above, it was not necessary for the Regimental Aid Station to function as an intermediate treatment station for casualties from the Battalions evacuated to the beaches, and after D-plus-10 day to the Division Hospital. After D-plus-4-5 day, the Regimental Aid Station was concerned only with straggler casualties and those occurring among the Regimental C.P. personnel.

Casualties in the 23d Marines from 19Feb45, to 16Mar45, may be grouped as follows: W&E - 1412; W&NE - 256; S&E - 350; KIA - 473; MIA - 9. This represents total casualty figure for the Regiment as of 25Mar45. The following statistical figures, based on 720 casualties selected at random from the first three group reports may be considered typical for RCT 23. Wounds of the -

Head and Neck	10.5%	-	60%	shrapnel
Chest and Back	7.1%	-	42%	"
Abdomen	3.1%	-	13%	"
Upper Extremity	21.8%	-	60%	"
Lower Extremity	13.4%	-	60%	"
Buttocks	1.6%	-	99%	"
Multiple Wounds	15.8%	-	79%	"
Blast Concussion	9.0%	-		
Combat Fatigue	17.7%	-		
Non-battle casualties less than 1%				

The anatomical distribution of wounds is typical, but the percentage of wounds due to shrapnel (62%), and blast concussion was higher than encountered in the Saipan-Tinian oper-

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ation. This was due to more consistent and concentrated use of mortars, artillery, and rockets by the enemy. The higher incidence of blast concussion may be related to the employment by the enemy of rockets, and particularly, heavier mortar (150-240mm) than previously encountered by this Regiment. A moderate number of casualties were due to burns from incendiary projectiles, and grenades. The majority of wounds caused by small arms fire was due to 7.7 cal. A definite group of casualties were due to a type of small arms explosive projectile. One of the Battalion Surgeons is of the opinion that numerous casualties encountered were due to dum-dum small arms projectiles. There is no known evidence of employment by the enemy in this operation of small arms wooden projectiles.

Combat Fatigue occurred most frequently in the 3d Battalion, and least in the 1st Battalion. The incidence seems to be directly proportional to the length of time a unit is on the line, and reaches a peak after 2-3 days in the assault. This diagnosis is a poor term, used collectively to classify casualties evacuated for a variety of ill-defined reasons; the most definite one being loss of efficiency due to physical exhaustion. The latter is a combination of prolonged or over exertion, emotional excitement and psychic strain, thermal effects, loss of sleep, and malnutrition. Some cases of blast concussion were undoubtedly classified as combat fatigue. The incidence of hysteria was negligible. No parasitic or endemic diseases have to date been reported. A small number of insect bites were encountered, and it was usually found that these men had been using Japanese blankets, or were sleeping in Japanese installations. These bites were probably due to Phthiris Corporis (body lice), as POWs reported that a high percentage of the garrison was so infested.

Sanitary measure employed were fundamental. Slit trenches and "cat holes" were commonly used. Where static conditions permitted, oil drums with pre-fabricated covers were used. Garbage disposal was by burning and burial. Burial was most common (for security reasons), but least satisfactory since without direct supervision the tendency of the average individual is to merely get the rubbish out of sight,

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"in situ", and this is often at an ineffective depth. Burial disposal of garbage and rubbish accomplished in this manner, and, usually widely disseminated by individual efforts, is useless. K and C rations provide a comparable amount of rubbish for disposal, and a monotonous deficient diet for continuous use. Ten in One rations, while more appetizing and nourishing, increase the garbage disposal problem, and tend to encourage "improvization". Meat cans, Japanese utensils, and improvised cooking vessels are used for heating and preparing rations. This in itself is not a serious health hazard, but, the exposure of food to flies during the process of cooking and eating is a definite hazard. Inadequate facilities for washing mess gear leaves a residue on it which is an excellent culture media for rapid, prolific bacterial reproduction, the ultimate cause of epidemic gastro-intestinal diseases. This inevitable process is hard to believe or carelessly ignored by the uninitiated. An empty stomach does not bend readily to reason, and all personnel are guilty of violating various basic principles to some degree.

On D-plus-22 day an efficient, fly-proof galley was installed by the Regimental Quartermaster section, and hot rations provided for rear area and Reserve personnel.

The water supply was at all times adequate and potable; however, the substance used for initial lining, and subsequent relining of expeditionary cans imparts a very disagreeable flavor.

Flies constituted a problem, appearing abundantly during warm days. Control was semi-satisfactory by use of insecticide sprays in local areas. Spraying by airplane produced no appreciable decrease in the incidence during the time observed, but it is known to be very effective. Flies were particularly abundant in the forward areas where police, and spraying could not be too effectively maintained. This was also aggravated by the presence, and unavoidable delay in disposal of the dead. The abundance of flies contributed on D-plus-27 to a minor outbreak of diarrhea (50-60 cases) in the 1st Battalion. Symptoms were of short duration, and it was

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not necessary to evacuate any cases for treatment. Flies constitute the major source and means for starting epidemic gastro-intestinal diseases (diarrheas, dysentery, etc). The most important single method of controlling fly breeding is prompt efficient disposal of garbage and excreta.

The cooler, inclement weather was an influencing factor contributing to the general good health of the command. Evacuation for heat exhaustion was non-existent as compared to Saipan-Tinian. Also the per capita water consumption was only a fraction of that previously required.

The absence of mosquitoes was another important factor in that the occurrence of mosquito-born diseases need not be expected.

Ulcerative pyogenic processes, resulting from bacterial invasion of macerated scratches and insect bites was uncommon. This is in contrast to the Saipan-Tinian operation where they constituted a common annoyance during and after the operation. The lower incidence is also due to the relatively smaller number of flies encountered on IWO JIMA.

The absence of civilians, and associated domestic installations was another important factor contributing to the general health of the command. Diseases peculiar to this type of grouping, and the prevalent sources of bacteria associated with inadequate sanitation, and refuse from domestic animals were not encountered. No known cases of gas gangrene infection have been reported to date.

Reptiles, centipedes, and scorpions were not encountered.

In general, the diseases led to be expected by intelligence reports, particularly respiratory diseases, have not yet appeared.

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RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONTD.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Successful evacuation of casualties during the early hours of an assault landing is dependent upon efficient operation of the shore party and beach party medical sections, and the boat crews (particularly coxswains) of LCVPs or other small, waterborn craft used for evacuation. Sufficient key personnel, with previous experience in an actual amphibious operation, must be provided these activities in order to maintain efficient function despite enemy fire and casualties among their personnel. Thorough training, and rehearsal exercises are obviously important, but cannot be expected to substitute for experience. Personnel, with previous experience, are better suited to assume command and control in the face of unexpected emergencies.
2. An excess complement of palletized medical supplies, particularly litters, should go in to the beach with the assault waves and be left there for subsequent use.
3. The maximum practical number of Battalion Aid Station personnel should be trained with the infantry companies so that they may be used as replacements for company aid men. An additional complement of hospital corpsmen should be similarly trained with the units they expect to support. This group might come from the collecting section; preferably, it should be an excess complement permanently attached to the Regiment.
4. Unit control of field sanitation must be emphasized, and recommended procedures strictly adhered to by all personnel.
5. Medical brandy proved to be a very valuable adjunct in the management of casualties. The supply was inadequate to meet requirements.
6. Arming of medical personnel (particularly company aid men) with automatic pistols or revolvers in preference to carbines is highly desirable.

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HEADQUARTERS, TWENTY-THIRD MARINES,
TNP-cmm FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA.

APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO
RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

SHORE PARTY

1. (a) The following summary of shore party activities on Yellow Beaches is based on a definition of Yellow Beach 1 as that beach in TA 149 KG, and Yellow Beach 2 as that beach immediately to the North located TA 149 CD. The boundary between beaches during the operation was a wrecked Jap Lugger on the beach at 774-718.

(b) This summary, prepared by the RCT Shore Party Commander, should not be permitted to give the impression that the serious problems encountered were surmounted without difficulty. Command control of the beaches, although established initially, was not consistently maintained by regularly assigned Shore Party personnel. On Yellow Beach 1, in particular, the Command control was assumed and retained by the RCT Quartermaster for a period of several days by order of the RCT Commander. On Yellow Beach 2, Command control was interrupted by untenable conditions in the beach area, but was regained as promptly as could be expected. The RCT Shore Party Commander was unable to exercise effective control of the RCT beaches, and confined his efforts to the activities of Yellow Beach 2 until D-plus-3. Thereafter, conditions improved and the beaches were fully reorganized by D-plus-5. That we are still without a solution to the problem of Shore Party organization is obvious from the experience on Iwo Jima. Temporary organizations requiring the utilization of inexperienced personnel from Naval Construction Battalions continues to prove entirely unsatisfactory.

(1) 19 February, 1945: D-day.

The reconnaissance sections of the assault BLT shore parties were boated with the fifth wave and landed on Yellow 1 and Yellow 2 at 0920. The beaches were receiving heavy fire at this time which restricted movement of these elements, and caused severe casualties. By 0930, both assault BLT Shore Party Commanders, and the Beachmaster for Yellow 2 had become casualties.

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At 0945 the main body of the Shore Party for Yellow 1, under command of the Assistant Shore Party Commander, landed on Red Beach 2. Two (2) tractors, one (1) utility and one bull dozer were also landed at this time. Contact was established with Yellow 1 at 1015 and the Assistant Shore Party Commander assumed command of that beach at 1045. The utility tractor was employed to assist landing of vehicles and the bull dozer was used to cut a road through the terrace to aid movement of tanks. All personnel were initially employed to aid evacuation of casualties. By 1100 the Shore Party Medical Officer and 70% of the corpsmen had become casualties, together with one Shore Party officer, the Beachmaster, and members of both Beach and Shore Party.

The tactical situation on Yellow 2 was such that some elements of the assault troops were still in the immediate beach area at 1100, and the Shore Party had not landed. Need for a bull dozer to assist tanks resulted in dispatching one LCM of the Baker wave, containing an armored TD14 bull clam at 1130. At 1200 the remainder of the wave was dispatched to the beach. Of this section of the wave, one LCM containing the assistant Shore Party Commander, the communications team, twenty men of "A" Company, 4th Pioneer Battalion, and a utility tractor, landed on Yellow 2. The remainder of the wave, consisting of Co "B", 133rd Naval Construction Battalion and the Shore Party Medical Section, landed on Blue Beach 1.

The Assistant Shore Party Commander upon verifying the report that the Shore Party Commander was a casualty assumed command of Yellow Beach 2 at 1330. A CP was set up on the left flank of the beach and communications were established with Yellow Beach 1 and Blue Beach 1 at 1400.

Heavy fire on Blue Beach 1 prevented movement of Co "B", 133rd Naval Construction Battalion, and caused excessive casualties including 100% of medical personnel during the afternoon.

At 1400 floating dump cargo began to land on both Yellow Beaches. Heavy fire prevented more than one boat to land at a time. LVTs carrying loads from preloaded LSTs were also being dispatched to the beach and the need for additional bull dozers ashore resulted in dispatching LSM 206 to Yellow Beach 1 at 1400. The LSM beached and completely unloaded on right flank of that beach. The tractors were moved immediately to left of

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APPENBIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

Yellow 1 to prepare a road to permit passage of LVTs to front lines. Enemy machine gun fire slowed progress of the road which finally stopped 100 yards inland when one tractor struck a mine. It was not until the next day that clearance of the mine field was completed and work could be resumed.

The armored tractor on Yellow 2 was employed to construct a road inland on left flank of that beach, but enemy fire caused work to discontinue there at 1500.

At 1430 the Reserve BLT Shore Party landed on Red 2. Contact was made with Yellow 1 and personnel were ordered to dig in on left flank of that beach.

Heavy machine gun and small arms fire had inflicted heavy casualties to tractor drivers on Yellow 1 and LSM 202 was ordered to the beach to unload an armored TD-18 dozer at 1600.

RCT 23 Shore Party Headquarters landed on Yellow 2 at 1645. The Transport Division Beachmaster landed with the Shore Party Commander and immediately repeated earlier requests for relief Beach Parties for Yellow Beaches. RCT 23 Shore Party CP was established in vicinity of block house at TA 149 B, communications were established with Yellow and Blue beaches, and at 1730 the RCT Shore Party Commander assumed such control as was possible under the circumstances.

Conditions on Yellow 2 at that time were critical. "B" Company, 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was still on Blue Beach 1 and heavy mortar fire which had fallen on beaches during afternoon had reduced the Shore Party personnel on this beach to 2 officers and 42 enlisted. All of "A" Company, 4th Pioneer Battalion and "B" Company, 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was ordered to move at once and arrangements were made with Shore Party Commander Blue 1 to evacuate casualties from Yellow 2 over Blue beach.

Two aid stations were established on Yellow 1 during the afternoon. Regimental Surgeon RCT 23 evacuating casualties on left flank and Battalion aid station of 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion which had landed at 1500 was operating in the center of the beach.

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APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

Shore party commanders were instructed to make road reconnaissance from the beach to air field No 1 and resume construction of roads. Reconnaissance reports were received at Shore Party CP at 1930 indicating roads could be completed by noon D-plus-1 from both beaches.

At 1900 heavy mortar fire falling on Yellow 2 started a fire in small arms dump. Armored tractor of "C" Company, 4th Engineer Battalion which was on the beach was employed to put it out. Remaining ammunition and supplies on the beach were moved to revetted dumps about 100 yards inland by 2200 and suffered no more damage. All supplies landed on Yellow Beach 1 were turned over to the RCT Quartermaster (23rd Marines), who had assumed control of and was operating the beach.

During the afternoon the First Battalion, 14th Marines landed on Yellow 2 and moved into firing position along entire length of that beach. Positions were about 25 yards from the water's edge restricting unloading on that beach to the vicinity of the Jap Luger on the left flank. This condition did not change during the entire operation. At the same time elements of the Second Battalion, 14th Marines landed on Yellow 1 and by morning of D-plus-1 guns of this Battalion had restricted operations to the left flank on this beach.

Heavy fire continued to fall on beaches during the night. Limited unloading of high priority cargo was carried on, and Shore Party personnel were employed to assist artillery in moving ammo to gun positions and moving ammunition and supplies to infantry units.

Beach defenses which had been set up by party during the afternoon were reinforced on both beaches by LVTs during the night. Defenses on Yellow 2 were further reinforced by elements of Regimental Weapons of RCT 23 and First Battalion, 14th Marines.

(2) 20 February, 1945: D-plus-1.

Inspection of beaches revealed the area in vicinity of the wrecked Jap Luger to be the only suitable unloading point on Yellow 2. The remainder of the beach was too narrow to permit operation and was almost completely blocked by wrecked landing

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APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

craft. Construction of road to the air field continued and by 1200 was passable for LVTs.

Operations on Yellow 1 were confined to the left flank but development of two unloading points and location of RCT 23 dumps in that area necessitated it's early development for accelerated unloading. Reserve BLT Shore Party which was located on left flank of Yellow 2 was ordered to remain on Yellow 1 and work under direction of the Regimental Quartermaster who was exercising control of most of the activities of the Shore Party in unloading operations.

The control vessel was requested to send LSM 202, with remainder of shore party equipment to the beach at 0800. At 0830 the control vessel reported it was unable to contact LSM 202.

At 0830 urgent messages from units of the Twenty-Fourth Marines for rations, water and ammunition were received. Four LVTs were loaded and dispatched to Twenty-Fourth Marines and additional LVTs which reported in from Blue Beach were loaded and returned. Battalion Quartermasters of the Twenty-Fourth Marines sent working parties to carry rations to their units.

During the morning relief of Beach Parties on both beaches was accomplished.

At 1030 S-3, Twenty-Third Marines reported that Engineers were clearing and marking lanes through the mine field behind Yellow 2.

At 1130 control reported LSM 202 on its way to the beach. It landed to left of Luger and unloaded all equipment except the large crane.

Mortar and artillery fire which had fallen periodically all morning became intense at 1330, and continued until 1500, causing damage to equipment and inflicting severe casualties to personnel including the Acting Shore Party Commander, Yellow Beach 2.

Company Commander, Company "B", 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was named Shore Party Commander of Yellow 2. At 1530 advance CP of Division Shore Party landed on Yellow 2 and established an advance Division Shore Party

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APPENDIX NO. 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

By 1700 broached landing craft completely blocked Yellow 2 and control was notified to send all traffic for Yellow Beaches to Yellow 1. Underwater demolition teams were requested by the Beachmaster to clear wreckage on Yellow 2.

Unloading continued throughout the day on Yellow 1. Two roads were completed which enabled LVTs to proceed to the air field from that beach. LSMs carrying rations and ammunition began to land on Yellow 1 during the afternoon. LVTs continued to land carrying loads from LSTs and shore based LVTs were used to haul supplies from the beach to the dumps.

Communications personnel succeeded in overheading wire lines during the day and by 1800 permanent wire facilities were completed.

A flash Red Warning at 1900 caused unloading to stop on Yellow 1. Work was resumed at 2000 when air raid did not materialize and continued throughout the night with frequent interruptions caused by enemy fire falling in the area.

(3) 21 February, 1945: D-plus-2.

Construction of a lateral beach road at waters edge was begun, and artillery was requested to remove guns which were on waters edge to positions inland. This move was not completed until D-plus-3 and road construction was stopped.

Roads inland from both beaches were joined at lower edge of air field, and were passable to Dukws, LVTs and trucks by noon.

At 1200, Headquarters Company, 133rd Naval Construction Battalion sent to RCT 23 dump to work as dump labor party, and the Shore Party Motor Transport Section was established and in operation on Yellow 1 with all vehicles and tractors pooled on that beach.

Operations on Yellow 2 during the day were limited to clearing wreckage from the beach. Activity of Naval demolition teams necessitated closing beach to all boat traffic.

Units of RCT 21 of the Third Marine Division landed across Yellow 1 during the day preventing continuous unloading of supplies. By 1600 amphibious trailers which had landed during the

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APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

previous 24 hours threatened to block the entire beach. Since no prime movers were able to move them through the soft sand, supplies were removed from the trailers and sent to dumps in LVTs. The trailers were then parked on the North end of Yellow 1.

"C" Company, 4th Medical Battalion landed at 1300 to operate aid stations on Yellow Beaches.

A Flash Red was received at 1730, but personnel were instructed to remain at work until ship's AA fire was opened. Ships on the beach making smoke during Flash Red necessitated large security elements to guard against counter landing. The Beachmaster was requested to have ships retract or not make smoke during air alerts.

Commanding Officer RCT 23 notified Shore Party Commander that BLT 1 and 2 would reinforce beach defenses during night if necessary. Arrangements were completed by 1900 for movement of BLTs to beach if needed but no enemy action occurred during the night.

(4) 22 February, 1945: D-plus-3.

Received message at 1000 from Division Shore Party Commander that SPs were now under Division control. At 2045, 21 February, 1945, the RCT Shore Party Commander was notified by Division Shore Party Commander that Shore Party RCT 21 less detachment was assigned to Yellow Beaches for duty. This shore party was assigned to operate Yellow 2, and the Shore Party Commander RCT 21 was named Shore Party Commander Yellow 2. "B" Company, 133rd Naval Construction Battalion and remaining personnel of "A" Company, 4th Pioneer Battalion were ordered to report to the Shore Party Commander Yellow 1 for duty there, placing entire Shore Party RCT 23 on Yellow 1 beach.

Clearance of wreckage on D-plus-2 allowed full operation of all beaches during the day and by 1600 Beachmasters were notified that 3 LCTs, 2 LSMs, and 2 LSTs could be unloaded simultaneously. Lateral beach road was completed during the day.

(5) 23 February, 1945: D-plus-4.

Preparatory work was started to establish a 4th Division dump in area 164 Y. Revetments for fuel and ammunition storage were dug during the day.

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APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

The Commanding General, Fourth Marine Division landed on Yellow 2 at 1100, and proceeded to Division CP.

At 1300 the Regimental Quartermaster, Twenty-Third Marines, secured his dumps and left the beach. The Regimental Quartermaster had worked with the Shore Party continuously during period from D-day to D-plus-4 and the assistance rendered to the Shore Party at a time when the only remaining Shore officers were members of Naval Construction Battalion, not sufficiently experienced in shore party work to direct unloading operations, can not be over estimated. At 1700 one dump and two beach teams of the Eighth Field Depot reported in to the Shore Party. One beach team was assigned to each beach and the dump team was sent to Division Dump.

At 1730 Headquarters Company, 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was ordered to move to Division Dump and work as labor party.

During the night ammunition and fuel was unloaded and moved to the Division Dump.

2. (a) The RCT Shore Party lost 17 officers and 282 enlisted on Yellow Beaches as a result of enemy fire. On D-plus-2, accurate fires destroyed the dumps on Blue Beaches, necessitating the supply of RCT 24 and RCT 25 from RCT 23 beach and inland dumps.

(b) Beach Parties were, in general, inexperienced and inadequately trained. Casualties to key personnel, with no provision for assumption of command, left the Beach Party on Yellow Beach 1 practically ineffective throughout D-day. (See Appendix No 1). On Yellow Beach 2, although the Beachmaster became a casualty, the Beach Party continued to function in a relatively satisfactory manner. Through misunderstanding of Shore Party organization and doctrine, orders for the Transport Squadron Commander deprived BLT Shore Party Commanders of command authority over the ships' Beach Parties. This resulted in delay and confusion in landing the rear echelons of beach parties assigned to the assault BLTs. On Yellow Beach 1, the beach party was withdrawn, necessitating the establishment of evacuation and traffic control facilities from personnel of the RCT organic supply personnel. The replacement Beach Party which reported to this beach on D-plus-1 was entirely inexperienced, but carried out its functions in a highly commendable manner.

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APPENDIX NO 2 TO ANNEX DOG TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

(c) Ships' Platoons for the Twenty-Fourth Replacement Draft, were exceptionally effective under the prevailing conditions.

3. (a) For each operation in which the RCT has participated a different Shore Party organization has been employed. The RCT Shore Party, as such, is deprived of the benefits of past experience and training. Such practice results in excessive casualties to technical personnel and does not lend itself to efficient Shore Party functioning.

(b) It is recommended that steps be taken to provide a permanent Shore Party Organization, organic to the Division, in order that errors now consistently committed may be precluded in the future.

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REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY-THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, (REINFORCED), FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX EASY TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

COMMUNICATION REPORT

1. The initial planning and training following the combat team's return to our base camp from the Saipan-Tinian operation was in accordance with Fourth Marine Division Training Order No 20-44, with emphasis on Appendix 1.

The first personnel replacements came to the regiment from the disbanded 20th Marines. These replacements were well trained as communication personnel. Later replacements received from disbanded defense battalions had been trained as radar operators. These radar operators were joined as radio-telephone operators, but they were not so trained and were not received in sufficient time to effect this training. Communication personnel are so vital a part of the RCT in an operation that early assignment of CP replacements is imperative in order that complete indoctrination and training be accomplished prior to embarkation.

The loading of the combat team's Signal equipment onto APA's was according to doctrine. During the loading, a BD-72 was installed on the TransDiv flagship and lines run to each of the three APA's and to the TQM office ashore which had lines to the base camp. This telephone installation was of assistance in the loading and is recommended for further loading in a small harbor.

Communications for the Maui rehearsal operated efficiently. The TransDiv was found lacking in radio equipment for the boat waves and a redistribution of radio equipment was ordered by the commander of TransDiv 45.

2. Aboard ship message center operation was normal, and embarked personnel assisted the ships' communication personnel as runners, radio operators and in the routing of traffic. A switch-board, BD-71 or BD-72, was installed on each ship and troop offices, message center, quarters and radio room were connected by field telephone. This proved a time saver.

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ANNEX TABS TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

Training aboard ship was continuous on radio procedure, 4th Mar Div Sig SOP-3 and SOI-6, briefing for the operation, map reading, routine physical drills and weapons inspections.

While in port serious difficulty was encountered obtaining boats for message center or officer messenger runs to other ships in the squadron.

3. The BLT and RCT communication platoons were each divided into two sections, one to accompany the commanding officer's echelon of the CP, the second to accompany the executive officer's echelon. In the regimental headquarters, the executive officer commanded the Advance Message Center of RCT 23. The assistant communication officer was in charge of the communication section of the Advance Message Center, and manned the same radio nets that the commanding officer's section operated. Both sections maintained a continuous watch on the Division C. W. command, The Division Voice Command, the Regimental C. W. Command, the Regimental Voice Command, the Regimental Auxiliary Voice Command, and a listening watch on the 4th Mar Div Support Air Observer net.

On Dog-Day, the unloading and embarking of signal equipment and personnel went according to schedule. Immediately after the commanding officer's free boat was on its way to the control boat, Division Headquarters came up on the RCT 23 voice command net, and the RCT 23 auxiliary Voice Command Net to send out some intelligence messages. These messages were very long, had a high priority classification, and clogged our only two Regimental voice nets for an hour during the critical phase just prior to H-Hour. Moreover this same intelligence material had been received from APA 196 prior to our embarking into small boats. It is recommended that Division not come up on Regimental nets except in an emergency and allow the Regiment to pass messages to its BLT's through normal channels.

After the Division got off the RCT 23 voice nets, reports were made promptly and RCT 23 communications functioned excellently.

BLT 2/23 was able to obtain from APA 207 an SCR 610 on the boat control circuit and it aided greatly in

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ANNEX EASY TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

organizing for the approach to the line of departure and in hitting the beach.

The Shore Party and Beachmaster communications were hard hit and apparently did not operate the first few days. An SCR 300 on the RCT 23 Auxiliary Voice Command was left on Yellow Beach control vessel with the R-4 representative on that vessel. Upon landing, another SCR 300 was left with the Regimental Quartermaster on the beach, for Shore Party Communications, as there was no communication set-up otherwise established. A TCS radio on APA 196, manned by two men from RCT 23 until the ship was unloaded, was maintained on the Regimental C. W. Command. Thus, during the unloading and when beach communications failed, we were able to pass considerable traffic originated by the Regimental Quartermaster, who had assumed command of the beach, directly to the R-4 representative on Yellow Beach control or to the TransDiv flagship.

4. The initial Regimental Command Post communications operated under considerable difficulty. The normal radios were maintained plus an MZ radio on the Logistical Control net, 2932 KCS. This station on 2932 KCS, further assisted the Regimental Quartermaster on the beach and our own CP in clearing traffic to the RCT 23 and the 4th Mar Div representatives on control vessels. After D-Day, when long administrative reports and operational reports had to be made, it was found advantageous to request the headquarters of the 4th Mar Div to come up on 27.2MCS, which was the emergency common frequency. This permitted urgent traffic to be cleared on the normal nets and all administrative traffic of lengthy reports to be cleared on 27.2MCS. It was not necessary to use this means of clearing traffic after Division came ashore since such reports were handled by Message Center runs.

Message Center functioning was normal. Any extra personnel during the early days were used to help carry signal gear from the beach to numerous dumps.

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ANNEX EAST TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

The Wire Section rapidly installed their BB-72's and before nightfall of Dog-Day, all of RCT 23's battalions were tied in, plus BLT 1/24, 2/14 (Arty), and to beach Yellow 1. On D plus 1, the adjacent units on our right and left were tied in and this was maintained throughout the rest of the operation.

Prior to the Division Headquarters taking over our switch-board location on D plus 4, at TA 164 X, we had lines to BLT's 1/23, 2/23, 3/23, 1/24, 5th Mar Div, RCT 27, RCT 21, Arty Bn 2/14, RCT 24, RCT 25 and the Shore Party. These lines were difficult to install and maintain with only regimental wire teams, but the added advantages at that time warranted the utmost in effort. The wire teams again did their usual outstanding job. All wire routes were chosen carefully. By leaving considerable slack in all lines, they remained operative remarkably well.

When the RCT 23 CP moved to TA 182 Y, a pole line was installed between Division Headquarters and our CP. This installation again proved the enormous dividends pole line construction pays in the rear areas.

The afternoon prior to the Combat Team movement on 6 March, 1945, into the left of the Division Z of A, a pole line of five pairs was laid via RJ 184, CR 249, and CR 273 to airfield No 2 where a test station was established. This installation usually carried seven circuits and was most efficient. Over No 2 Airfield two lines were laid to each assault battalion over different routes, and adjacent battalions connected laterally. This enabled the combat team to have continuous wire communications.

During the latter phase of operations beyond Hill 382, BLT 2/23 had the 81mm Mortar platoon of BLT 3/23 attached. BLT 1/23 was in Corps Reserve. BLT 2/23 was given the use of BLT 1/23's channel 14 on the SCR 300, and

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

this channel was used to fire the 81mm mortars. This was most efficient because telephone lines from the mortar OP to the gun positions were nearly impossible to maintain. An SCR 300 was kept on channel 14 at the mortar position, the battalion CP, and with the mortar observer. This conclusively proved the efficiency one additional SCR 300 channel for each BLT would give each 81mm mortar platoon.

5. This regiment suffered the following casualties among Communication Personnel:

1 Officer	KIA
1 Officer	WIAE
7 Radio Operators	KIA
16 Radio Operators	WIAE
6 Wiremen	KIA
27 Wiremen	WIAE
3 Msg Cen Men	KIA
7 Msg Cen Men	WIAE

2 Total Officer casualties
<u>66</u> Total Enlisted casualties
68 Total Communication Personnel casualties

These personnel casualties were partially replaced by 18 Communication Personnel from the 24th Replacement Draft, and the temporary attaching of 19 Communication Personnel from the 1st Joint Assault Signal Company.

The few tanks equipped with SCR 300 radios had excellent tank-infantry communications. Not only could the tanks and infantry easily communicate with each other, the tanks could also keep abreast of the tactical situation. Every tank should have an SCR 300 radio. The telephone mounted on the rear of each tank was extremely dangerous to use. The tanks drew continuous enemy fire, thus the telephone was not extensively used for tank--infantry communications.

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ANNEX EASY TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

Considerable confusion was caused by having all Able infantry companies in the Division on one SCR 536 frequency, all Baker companies on another frequency, etc. It is recommended that the frequencies be assigned at random in order that the short calls used will not be misunderstood when two companies on the same frequency are within receiving range of each other.

Such of our SCR 300 and 536 radios that had been used on previous operations, developed minor troubles. Therefore it is recommended that radios SCR 300 and SCR 536 that have been in service for a considerable length of time be used for training purposes only, and replacements furnished before an operation.

Landing Teams should be provided an SCR 610 set up on the boat control circuit.

Considerable difficulty is always encountered in contacting the LST's prior to the debarking of troops in LVT's. It is recommended that LST's embarking elements of a combat team, guard a circuit common to the APA's on which the combat team is embarked.

Each battalion took 18 miles of W-110 wire, 50 miles of W-130 wire. The Regimental Weapons Company carried 10 miles of W-110 and 11 miles of W-130 wire. The Headquarters & Service Company carried 30 miles of W-110 wire and 10 miles of W-130 wire. During the landing and unloading phase there were losses of wire that cannot be estimated. The amount carried in the assault was sufficient. The regiment laid about 125 miles of W-110 wire and 150 miles of W-130 wire during the operations on Iwo Jima.

The initial allowance plus five days replenishment of batteries was carried by the regiment. A shortage of batteries was experienced during the first three days ashore when the Division Signal Quartermaster could not make deliveries and units had lost considerable

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ANNEX-EASY TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT.

gear on the beaches. There is a great need for the Signal Quartermaster improving the method of supply during the first days of an operation. There are always items that become critical during certain periods of the assault and early beachhead phases of an operation. The Signal Quartermaster should be prepared to land supplies requested by an RCT on any beach at any time after How-Hour, Dog-Day.

SCR 610 radios are authorized by the T/A for forward observers. This radio is not practical for continuous operation on the move, afoot. When in operation the height of the antenna is such as to draw enemy fire. The SCR 610 is not satisfactory as a radio for artillery F. O.'s. It is recommended that they be issued SCR 300's or sets of similar size and characteristics.

The present tendency in telephone gear is to make it more durable and heavier. The present issued BD-71 and BD-72, are too heavy for assault elements. It is recommended that a light-weight switch-board of twelve and twenty drops be designed.

It is recommended that communications personnel be properly rewarded for their ability, initiative, and devotion to duty by increases in pay or rank. This organization has had no promotions for communication personnel for over a year.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX FOX TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

SECTION I

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

- (a) Co A (Captain KALEN).
- (b) Co B (Captain TOBIN).
- (c) Co C (Captain MC DANIEL).
- (d) 81mm Mort Plat (Lt. HANTHORN).
- (e) 1st Plat, RegtI Wpns Co (Lt. STONE).
- (f) 2d & 4th Plats, Co C, 4thTkBn (Lt. BELLMON & Lt. DEVERS).
- (g) 1st Plat, Co C, 4thEngrBn (Lt. RUSSELL).
- (h) Shore Party (Capt. PALMER).
 - (1) Co A, 4thPionBn, less dets.
 - (2) Co A, 133d NC Bn.
 - (3) Det, 8thFldDep.
- (i) BnHqCo (Less det) plus Ln&FO Det, Btry D, 2dBn, 14thMar, (Capt. HAEHL).
- (j) Det CollSec, Co C, 4thMedBn (PhM2/c HATT).
- (k) Co A, (Reinf), 10thAmphTracBn (Lt. WILLIAMSON).
- (l) 1st Plat (Reinf), Co B, 2dArmdAmphTracBn (Lt. SCOTT).
- (m) Det, 1st JASCO (Lt. DUVAL).
- (n) Co A, 24thReplDraft, plus Det HqCo, 24thReplDraft, (Lt. NICOLAI).
- (o) Det, H&S Co, RCT 23 (Int).

2. Planning for the Iwo Jima operation commenced with a map problem. From the map and an intelligence summary, the battalion wrote an operation order. Following this came a series of CPXs and problems based on the general plan of the map problem. Division held three CPXs to (1) perfect CP camouflage on open ground, (2) help staffs perfect operating procedures and SOPs, and, (3) give practice in movement of CPs.

3. In November, the regiment went aboard ship for five days amphibious training to perfect its ship to shore movement. On the final landing, an overnight problem was conducted ashore.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

4. Shortly after return to camp, a four day regimental firing problem was conducted. It simulated the landing and the turning movement planned for the coming operation. On the same terrain, this battalion conducted a firing and maneuver problem a week later. Companies were sent to the Amphibian Tractor Base and acquainted with the ladders used on the tractors for scaling embankments. On 31 December, 1944, that part of the BLT traveling on the U.S.S. Newberry was loaded at Kahului and went to Pearl Harbor. On 7 and 8 January, 1945, the Navy made practice runs. By 10 January, 1945, the assault troops on the LSTs had loaded and were prepared for the rehearsal. The rehearsal period lasted from 12 to 18 January, 1945. The rehearsal consisted of four phases; (1), Waves approached beach without landing; (2), Troops landed and immediately reembarked; (3), Troops landed and participated in an overnight problem ashore; and, (4), Waves approached beach without landing under cover of naval gunfire.

SECTION II

1. On completion of rehearsal exercises in the Malaeaa Bay Area, snips and LSTs docked at Pearl Harbor on 18 January, 1945. The LSTs left on 22 January followed by the APAs on 27 January. During the stay in Pearl Harbor, liberty and recreation parties were available to the men.

2. An intensive training schedule on the coming operation was effective as soon as the troops left Pearl Harbor. To maintain a good physical condition, all hands engaged in exercises daily. To be sure that the men were getting proper and complete instruction, the BLT commander and executive officer held frequent examinations. Classes were held daily for officers, and supporting arms officers conducted discussions on the operation as it effected their unit.

3. On 11 February, 1945, the transports and LSTs assembled at Saipan. The BLT staff was split and transferred to LSTs together with the remainder of the assault troops. The forward area rehearsal was limited to one day, 13 February, because of bad weather. On that day, an approach to within 200 yards of the beach was made off Tinian.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

SECTION III.

1. The tactical plan of BLT 1/23 called for the landing of the 1st Bn plus the attached engineer platoon and shore party-beach party reconnaissance details in amphibian tractors. The remainder of the landing team was boated in LSMs (tanks and shore party), LCMs (shore party equipment), and LCVPs (regimental weapons, main body of shore and beach party).
2. On D-day, 19 February, the LSTs moved on station about 0730 and had completed launching LVTs by 0800. The waves formed at the LD without difficulty and were dispatched by the Yellow Control Vessel according to schedule; the first wave crossing the LD at 0830.
3. The first wave consisting of eight LVT(A)s landed at 0902.
4. The second and third waves, carrying Co A and Co B, landed the first assault troops at 0903. Each company had seven LVT(2)s in the second wave carrying the two assault platoons; and four LVT(2)s plus two LVT(4)s in the third wave bearing the remainder of the company.
5. For the YELLOW BEACHES there was no fourth wave.
6. Wave five, composed of Co C; 1st Plat, Co C, 4thEngrBn; Shore-party and beach party reconnaissance detachments; landed at 0917 in eleven LVT(4)s and one LVT(2).
7. Wave six consisted of six LVT(4)s carrying the 81mm Mortar Plat and that part of Battalion headquarters not in Free Boats.
8. Wave seven was composed of three LSMs with Co C, 4thTkBn, on board.
9. Wave eight consisted of 1st Plat, RegtlWpnsCo, in six LCVPs and the Shore and Beach party in two LCMs plus six LCVPs.
10. One LSM with Shore party equipment made a special wave in itself.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

11. The command group was free to go where needed and therefore not in a wave. The BLT Comdr with necessary staff members and communications was boated in an LCVP. The remainder of the command group was in two LVT(4)s with MGS jeeps and one LVT(2).

12. When Co A and Co B, with Co A on the right, landed on Beach YELLOW ONE at 0903, they had received no casualties on the approach to the beach. However, on reaching the second terrace, the entire beach came under heavy and accurate artillery, mortar, high velocity direct fire weapons, machine gun and rifle fire. Through this an advance of about 300 yards was made with heavy casualties. Co C, BLT Reserve, pushed inland, on landing, into elements of Co A and Co B. At 1130, Co C was ordered to pass through Co B and continue the attack. By 1200, troops were within 200 yards of the eastern edge of Airfield No. 1. About 1400 the left flank of BLT 1/23, accompanied by tanks, had reached Airfield No. 1, and by 1530 the center and right flank had reached it. At 1700, BLT 3/23 passed through BLT 1/23. Co A and Co B dug in for the night at the base of airfield in TA 164Y and TA 165U, while Co C protected the RCT 23 CP.

13. Casualties for the day were twelve officers and one hundred and eighty-one (181) enlisted. Many key leaders were casualties. The Co Comdr, executive officer, and two platoon leaders of Co A were casualties. The Co Comdr, executive officer, and two platoon leaders of Co B were casualties. One platoon leader of Co C was a casualty.

SECTION IV

DOG PLUS ONE, 20 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The BLT area received heavy artillery and mortar fire during the night. Casualties included the Bn Comdr, operations officer, adjutant, and communications officer. BLT 1/23 continued in RCT reserve prepared to move on order to support the assault BLTs. For the night, Co B and Co C moved to TA 164XT and TA 165P and set up a secondary line of defense. BLT CP was moved to 164Y. The casualties for the day were five (5) officers and twenty (20) enlisted. On reorganizing BLT 1/23, LtCol. BLISSARD became BLT Comdr, Major SPERRY became operations officer, SgtMaj. HUTSON became adjutant, T3gt. FEENEY became communications officer, Lt. ZIMMERMAN became Comdr of Co A, and Lt. CARROLL Comdr of Co B.

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LIT 1/25 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

DOG PLUS TWO, 21 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Artillery and mortar fire fell throughout the night. The BLT remained in RCT reserve in same positions, prepared to support the attack. At 1600, Co A was attached to BLT 3/23 and moved to TA 182U, where a secondary defense line was set up behind Co K. Casualties for the day were four (4) enlisted.

DOG PLUS THREE, 22 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The night was relatively quiet with sporadic artillery and mortar fire. RCT 23, passed to Corps Reserve after being relieved by RCT 21 at 0730. Moved BLT to TA 164Y and TA 165PU. Co A reverted to parent control at 0800 and remained in TA 182U until it moved at 1300 to TA 165U. The weather was bad with rain all day. Casualties for the day were eight (8) enlisted.

DOG PLUS FOUR, 23 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Very little enemy fire in area during night. BLT remained in same position. Sent salvage details to cover beach YELLOW ONE. Reconnaissance made of RCT 24 zone of action by BLT Comdr. Casualties for day; seven (7) enlisted.

DOG PLUS FIVE, 24 FEBRUARY, 1945.

BLT remained in same position. Received five (5) officers and fifty (50) enlisted replacements. Received warning order for early movement. Reconnaissance of RCT 24 area made by Bn Comdr. Casualties for day were two (2) enlisted.

DOG PLUS SIX, 25 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Sent Bn-2 to CP of BLT 2/24 in TA 165E at 0600. Co C moved from assembly area at 0600 followed by Cos B, A, and Bn CP. Cos moved to new locations as follows: A to TA 182Q, B to TA 183KP, and C to TA 183G. Co A mopped up in TA 182Y. For night defense, Co C moved to TA 183B and set up a defensive line in rear of Co K, Co A and B set up a Regtl Reserve line through TA 183QR. Received two (2) officers

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

and fifty-seven (57) men as replacements. Co C remained in support of BLT 3/23 all day under intermittent mortar fire. About 2230 the RCT order was issued. BLT 1/23 was to pinch out Co K and continue in attack. One Plat of RegtlWpnsCo and Co C, 4thEngrBn was attached. Casualties for the day were eight (8) enlisted men.

DOG PLUS SEVEN, 26 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Mortar fire fell in Co B area during night. BLT 1/23 was committed and Co C given orders to pass through Co K and continue attack through TA 20ORXY, with 3dMarDiv on the left and Co I, 23rd Mar on right. Co C moved at 0730 to TA 20OSY on Hill 382. Both flanks were exposed due to lack of movement of flank units. Very heavy mortar, artillery and small arms fire was received from the front and both flanks. About 1030 the enemy fire increased in intensity and density against Co C causing heavy casualties. One Plat of Co B was attached to Co C and committed on the right flank. The remainder of Co B was committed on the left of Co C to fill a gap with the 3dMarDiv. Co A moved to TA 183AB at 0800 and set up a BLT Reserve line. Heavy fire was received from TA 200MNR and from Hill 382. Heavy casualties were caused by enemy positions firing into our left flank, which had been by-passed by the 3dMarDiv. Pulled back to TA 20ORW to reorganize and stay for night. Ammunition was badly depleted and required carrying parties to cross fire swept areas. Casualties for day were seven (7) officers and one hundred and four (104) enlisted. Lt. Carroll was wounded and Lt. Randall was made Co Comdr of Co B.

DOG PLUS EIGHT, 27 FEBRUARY, 1945.

During the night, Co C heard enemy tanks to its front. BLT 1/23 continued in assault with its objective as O-2. One Plat of RegtlWpnsCo was attached. Co A passed through Co C at 0630 and attacked at 0800 with Co B on its left. The companies advanced under heavy mortar fire, both large and small MG fire, and accurate rifle fire. A second attack was made at 1220. Co B had an exposed left flank the entire day. The line for the night was maintained in TA 20OSX. Upon being relieved at 0630, Co C moved to TA 183B in BLT Res and in moving back killed 50 enemy, knocked out two MGs in TA 200R (area by-passed by 3dMarDiv). Co A knocked out two enemy tanks with bazookas during the afternoon. Casualties for the day were forty-one (41) enlisted.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

DOG PLUS NINE, 28 FEBRUARY, 1945

BLT 1/23 continued in assault with its zone of action changed to include Hill 382. At 0815 the attack continued with Co E passing through Co B on the BLT left flank. Co A attacked Hill 382 and received heavy fire from both flanks, pillboxes, caves, and two heavy caliber weapons. During the attack, one Plat of Co E, guiding on RCT 9 lost contact on its right with the rest of Co E. This Plat followed into RCT 9 zone of action a couple of hundred yards until returned to Co E. Co E knocked out two tanks along the runway which formed the BLT left boundary at that point. A second attack was made at 1300 after a short artillery preparation. At 1415 Co A made a coordinated attack around the East of Hill 382. At 1000 one Plat of Co B was committed on the left of Co E. The line for the night reached a line across TA 200TO to rear of Hill 382. At 1800 Co C was ordered to fill in a gap between BLT left flank and the 3dMarDiv in TA 200MS. Co L was attached at 1600 as BLT Reserve. About 2100, two Plats of Co L were attached to Co C for the night to fill a gap between the BLT left flank and 3dMarDiv in the 3dMarDiv zone of action. Casualties for the day were three (3) officers and sixty-nine (69) enlisted.

DOG PLUS TEN, 1 MARCH, 1945.

At 0600, BLT 2/24 relieved BLT 1/23 in position and BLT 1/23 moved to assembly area in TA 182U. Made reconnaissance of RCT 25 area. Casualties for the day were two (2) enlisted. Joined two (2) officer replacements.

DOG PLUS ELEVEN, 2 MARCH, 1945

BLT remained in assembly area. A reconnaissance was made of RCT 24 and RCT 25 areas. Joined ninety-one (91) enlisted replacements at dark. Received warning order about 2200 for relieving BLT 1/25 prior to daylight. Casualties for the day were seven (7) enlisted.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

DOG PLUS TWELVE, 3 MARCH, 1945.

Took over zone of action of BLT 1/25 by 0630. BLT 1/23 with main effort on the left and one Plat of Co C, 4thTkbN, and one Plat of Co C, 4thEngrBn, attached, continued the attack to O-3. Co A was on the line with Co C echeloned to right rear in support. Co A attacked at 0730 with Co B, RCT 24 on left. As Co A advanced, Co C filled in on the right. Co A advanced under intense and accurate rifle fire with sporadic mortar fire, about 250 yards to the ridge in the center of TA 184F. Co C moved about 500 yards into TA 184F. The engineers cleared a path and a dozer tank made a road onto the ridge North of a large block house. From the road a flame thrower tank and engineers worked all afternoon on the blockhouse in TA 184F. Two other tanks which had worked on to the ridge, were used all day firing into enemy positions. At 1630, Co B passed through Co C in an attempt to make contact with Co F, RCT 25. The attack was stopped by heavy enemy MG, rifle, and mortar fire. Co B made contact with Co K after dark and lost three men in an anti-personnel mine field in making contact with Co A. Co C and engineers mopped up in rear of BLT zone. Co C was BLT reserve for night about 200 yards in rear of assault companies. Casualties for the day were one (1) officer and seventy-nine (79) enlisted.

DOG PLUS THIRTEEN, 4 MARCH, 1945.

The enemy threw hand grenades and mortars into line companies during night. Co B pulled out of enemy pocket prior to daylight. At 0730, Co B tried to advance over ridge line in TA 184F, but was stopped by heavy and very accurate MG and rifle fire from caves and emplacements. Again at 1130, Co A and Co B tried to advance, but its exposed left flank received heavy accurate rifle fire. Again at 1500 a coordinated attack failed to gain ground. During the day, tanks were used on the ridge as they had been the previous day. Co C remained in BLT reserve and mopped up in zone of action. Casualties for the day were one (1) officer and thirty-six (36) enlisted.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

DOG PLUS FOURTEEN, 5 MARCH, 1945.

During the night, attempts were made by enemy to infiltrate and sporadic mortar fire was received. BLT 1/23 was relieved by BLT 1/25 by 0700. Moved into assembly area at TA 182VW in Div reserve. Made reconnaissance of front lines in Div zone of action. At 1500 BLT 1/23 changed to Corps reserve, prepared to move on order on one hour's notice. Casualties for the day were six (6) enlisted.

DOG PLUS FIFTEEN, 6 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in TA 182VW in Corps reserve. Joined forty-three (43) enlisted as replacements. Made reconnaissance of routes of approach to 3d and 5thMarDivs front lines.

DOG PLUS SIXTEEN, 7 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in TA 182VW in Corps reserve. Casualty for the day was one (1) enlisted.

DOG PLUS SEVENTEEN, 8 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in TA 182VW in Corps reserve. At 2100 received RCT 23 operation order for attack on D plus 18. BLT 1/23 to support attack of BLT 2/23.

DOG PLUS EIGHTEEN, 9 MARCH, 1945.

This BLT released to RCT 23 control at 1400 and moved in support of BLT 2/23. Moved Co C to TA 201N at 1630, Co A moved to TA 183G in vicinity of CR 249. At 1730, one platoon was sent to the CP of RCT 23 in TA 182X. Co B tied in with Co C in TA 201MN to form a secondary line of defense for night. One squad was placed on the right flank of Co L to fill a gap. One platoon was sent to BLT 2/23 CP as protection. Casualties for the day were three (3) enlisted.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

DOG PLUS NINETEEN, 10 MARCH, 1945.

During the night there was almost no activity. BLT 1/23 ordered to conduct mopping up, prepared to support attack of BLT 2/23. Co C moved to TA 202F and supported Co G in its movement to beach. At 1500, Co B and Co C were ordered to set up a secondary line of defense in TA 201 OSN. One prisoner was captured and sent to RCT. At 0630 the Plat returned to Co A. At 0800, Co A moved to TA 200R and at 1000 Moved to TA 201W. It mopped up in 201X. At 1530, Co A moved to TA 201Y and set up a secondary line of defense behind BLT 3/24 to fill a gap between Co I, 24thMar, and Co L, 24thMar. Casualties for the day were six (6) enlisted.

DOG PLUS TWENTY, 11 MARCH, 1945.

At 0630 all attachments reverted to parent control and the companies were assigned zones of responsibility for mopping up. Co A mopped up in TA 185A and encountered an enemy pocket consisting of two pillboxes and three caves with accurate rifle fire which was cleared out. Estimated enemy killed was sixty-five (65). Co B mopped up and sealed caves in TA 201NST. Co C the same in TA 201 ON. At 1530, the relief of BLT 2/23 by BLT 1/23 was initiated and was completed by 1700. Companies located: A in TA 185H, B in TA 185C, C in TA 202SX. Co C, 4thEngrBn, attached, was used to guard a BLT supply dump in TA 201K. Casualties for the day were seven (7) enlisted.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-ONE, 12 MARCH, 1945.

During the night no activity. BLT remained in same positions and mopped up in zone of responsibility (Grid line 80 to sea). Attached engineers sealed caves all day. Started to bury enemy dead and salvage material. Casualties for the day were one (1) officer and six (6) enlisted.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-TWO, 13 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in same position. Continued mopping up. Buried dead Japs and salvaged gear. Enemy dead buried by companies:

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

Co A, 49; Co B, 39; and Co C, 32. Total 120. Casualties for the day were five (5) enlisted. Engineers returned to parent control in afternoon.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-THREE, 14 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in same position. Enemy dead buried: Co B, 2; and Co C, 2. Patrols from Co A covered beach and found a few caves with ammunition in them. One enlisted casualty for day.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-FOUR, 15 MARCH, 1945.

BLT remained in same position. Co C ordered to bury Japs in TA 202MLF. Received casualties from pocket being contained by the RCT 9. Casualties for the day were three (3) enlisted. BLT sent one hundred men to dedication ceremonies of the 4thMarDiv Cemetery. Captured two (2) Koreans.

DOG PLUS TWENTY-FIVE, 16 MARCH, 1945.

BLT 1/23 started at 0700 to move back to TA 182W on being relieved by BLT 1/24, doing burial and salvage work on the way. At 1200, boarded LST and later embarked on U.S.S. Kingsbury, (APA 177). Total casualties for the operation were thirty (30) officers and six hundred and seven enlisted (607). (Men wounded and not evacuated are not included).

SECTION V.

1. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) It is recommended that battalions be allowed to submit their staff section reports and dispatch summaries at 1730 or 1800 instead of 1630 as of 1600.

2. INTELLIGENCE.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

(a) The map used in the operation was very inadequate. If a better map cannot be produced for future operations, the production and wide distribution of close-up low oblique aerial photos is deemed imperative. When in the attack, every company should be issued such aerial obliques whenever there is an appreciable change in locale. It would be desirable in terrain such as was recently encountered, to have a map of larger scale and with a contour interval of 10 feet. Furthermore, a disproportionate amount of attention was paid to the beaches as compared with the amount of information given on the northern end of the island. We should be given not less information on the beaches, but more information on terrain and enemy installations inland.

(b) It is recommended that an officer from the D-2 section contact the Bn-2 each day the battalion is in the attack. The Bn-2 should then bring him up to the Bn OP. The regt and Bns have the same picture of the terrain and enemy defense of it because their OPs are close enough to give them the picture. A written report to the D-2 section will never describe adequately the terrain and enemy defense unless a representative from the section goes forward and sees it for himself. A visit to the Bn CP is not sufficient. The representative should be prepared to stay several hours at the Bn OP so that the proper picture for that day can be observed.

3. OPERATIONS.

(a) Planning and Preparation.

(1) It is believed that any replacements over and above the authorized strength of the regiment should be trained within the regiment, i.e., they should be distributed among the subordinate units and trained with them. During an operation, the replacements not absorbed by the battalions as combat troops, could be of great value as stretcher bearers and carrying parties. In no case should new replacements be released to battalions just prior to darkness of one day, to be used in the line the next morning. Combat efficiency is seriously impaired when this is done.

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L/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

(2) It does not appear that there is anything to gain in having troops aboard ship while the Navy is engaged merely in its ship maneuvers. It is certainly not conducive to high morale, especially when it adds to an already long stay aboard. It is furthermore believed, that most of the ships boat drills and boat maneuvers would be just as efficacious if the troops were not required to debark.

(b) Operations ashore.

(1) While it is recognized that a success should be exploited, it is not believed that in restricting terrain, such as was encountered on Iwo Jima, small pockets of resistance should be by-passed. Too many casualties were inflicted upon this Bn from by-passed positions and from adjacent zones of action while our flanks were exposed. It is unfortunate when the rate of advance of an organization is gauged by the speed of the slowest unit, but where maneuver is severely restricted it would appear to be a necessary evil.

(2) The coordination between tanks and infantry was inadequate, mainly for lack of satisfactory communication. It is recommended that the tank platoon leader contact the Battalion Comdr and the assault company Comdrs before the attack starts. He can be briefed on terrain, positive and probable targets, the plan of attack, etc. Arrangements can be made with the Co Comdrs for employment of secondary means of communications, should the necessity arise. It was our experience that the phones on the tanks seldom worked. These are important and should be carefully checked each night. It is recommended that an extension arrangement be developed which would allow an infantryman to use this phone without unduly exposing himself to fire. In passing, it is deemed worthwhile to mention that security discipline over the tank liaison radio net was very lax. The tanks were an invaluable aid at times and every effort should be made by all hands to increase their effectiveness and opportunity for employment.

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BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

(3) It is strongly urged that lives not be risked for the burial of enemy dead when preparing to turn over an objective to garrison forces. When enemy dead must be buried for sanitation reasons, it is justifiable in the eyes of the men. But the two lives lost in the process of burying enemy dead at the close of the operation and before a pocket in the zone of action to our left was cleaned out was, I believe, the greatest blow to the morale of the men sustained throughout the operation.

4. SERVICE AND SUPPLY.

(a) It is recommended that each battalion be allowed two weasels for use on the beaches and in difficult terrain inland. It is further recommended that the use of a rocket jeep be discontinued. Its operation by this Bn was anything but successful. The volume of fire it is able to deliver is not great enough to compensate for the inaccuracy of the weapon or its excessively wide dispersion.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX ABLE TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

ADMINISTRATION

1. PERSONNEL.

(a) Strength (Beginning of operation).

The BLT landed with a strength of thirty-nine (39) officers and eight hundred and seventy-three (873) enlisted. These officers and enlisted men were divided among the companies as follows:

HqCo (Marines).....	15 officers,	149 enlisted.
HqCo (Navy).....	2 officers,	41 enlisted.
Co ACO.....	8 officers,	231 enlisted.
Co B.....	7 officers,	227 enlisted.
Co C.....	7 officers,	225 enlisted.

These totals include the officers and enlisted men that were left aboard ship on different details. In addition, we had the following attachments:

Det, 1st JASCO.....	4 officers,	35 enlisted.
Det, Co C, 4thMedBn.....		14 enlisted.
Det, 2dBn, 14thMar.....	2 officers,	15 enlisted.
1stPlat, RegtlWpnsCo.....	1 officer,	31 enlisted.
Det, Co C, 4thTkBn.....	3 officers,	95 enlisted.
Det, Co C, 4thEngrBn.....	1 officer,	41 enlisted.
Co A, (Reinf), 10thAmphTracBn	8 officers,	178 enlisted.
Co A, 24thReplDraft.....	4 officers,	260 enlisted.
Det, H&S Co, RCT 23.....		3 enlisted.

(b) Replacements.

During the operation, the following replacements were joined by this organization:

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ANNEX BIBLE TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

24thReplDraft..... 7 officers, 243 enlisted.
H&S Co, RCT 23..... 3 officers,

These replacements were joined in several groups.

(c) Strength (End of operation).

At the end of the operation our strength was nineteen (19) officers and five hundred and fifty-one (551) enlisted. These officers and men were divided among the companies as follows:

HqCo (Marines)..... 9 officers, 120 enlisted.
HqCo (Navy)..... 2 officers, 14 enlisted.
Co A..... 3 officers, 137 enlisted.
Co B..... 3 officers, 138 enlisted.
Co C..... 2 officers, 142 enlisted.

In addition, we still had attached to us the following:

Det, 1st JASCO..... 3 officers, 12 enlisted.

2. CASUALTIES.

During the operation commencing on Dog-day and until we were secured on the 16th of March, 1945, we suffered nearly 700 casualties both officers and men. Of this total, we had twelve (12) officers and one hundred and fifty-four (154) enlisted dead.

We suffered nearly two hundred (200) casualties on Dog-day and only a very few were from combat fatigue. During the period 26-28 February, 1945, we had over two hundred (200) casualties of which thirty-five (35) were evacuated as sick. During the period 2-4 March, 1945, we suffered about one hundred and twenty-five (125) casualties of which eleven were sick and evacuated.

During the entire operation, we had sixty-nine (69) men sick and evacuated, and of this number sixteen (16) have returned to duty.

A day by day report of casualties is attached to this annex.

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UNCLASSIFIED FILE NO. 10 BHT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

3. MORALE.

During the period just preceding the rehearsal, and the period following the rehearsal, we were berthed in Pearl Harbor, T. H. During these periods, the personnel were granted liberty and beer parties and other recreation activities were arranged for them.

After leaving for the staging area, we arranged happy hours, playing of recordings, playing of the accordion, and some boxing matches. These proved very good and helped keep the fighting spirit of the troops up. At the staging area, the assault troops were transferred to LSTs where there was very little room for recreation.

The morale of the troops during the movement from the staging area to the target was very good. On the morning of Dog-day, the men were in good fighting spirit. The first few hours on the beach the morale of the troops was at its lowest. Around 1600 we started organizing our lines for the night. The companies were counting men, checking on their casualties, and the morale was much higher than it was during the morning, but it was still far from good. During the next couple of days, we rested, had better rations and received some fruits and juices. This combination of not being in the assault and the better rations built the morale up again. On the 25th we joined some replacements just about dusk and moved out into the assault the following morning. This was very disheartening to the men. They did not know the new men, had no chance to learn their names and some of the squad leaders did not even know what they looked like. Again, during the attack we joined replacements, and they were thrown in the following morning. All of this helped to lower the morale of the unit.

The next time we joined replacements, they were every type of personnel, from rifleman to trombone player. They had had very little training, and again they came the evening before we moved out.

In spite of these things, the fighting spirit was good. This was helped along by the better rations and plenty of fruits and juices and the fact that after about Dog plus ten we had hot coffee prepared for us twice daily by the Bn QM.

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ANNEX ABL TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

4. RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.

During the rehearsal and the movement to the staging area, we had two Chaplains aboard; one of which was Catholic and the other Protestant. Church services were held regularly. When we transferred to the LSTs, services for all faiths were held prior to leaving for the target.

On the island during the operation, the chaplains were around quite often and Communion was held for the men whenever possible.

5. POST EXCHANGE.

Post exchange supplies were adequate for this operation.

Post exchange supplies were loaded aboard all LSTs and were sold to the men. On the APA there was a good supply of ship service items. We appointed representatives for the different units, thus cutting down on the number of men in line. Everybody was able to get all of the supplies he wanted.

An adequate supply of post exchange goods, such as tooth paste, soap, candy and tobacco, was furnished free of charge to the men while on the island. These were distributed by the companies.

6. POSTAL.

The mail situation was excellent. A few days after we landed, machines for V-mail were already set up and in operation. Incoming mail was dropped by parachute at first and later brought in by planes. Outgoing mail service was very good. Toward the end of the operation, the men could write to their next of kin and it would be sent airmail at the expense of the division.

The Bn mail orderly was a runner at the Regtl CP and was therefore able to get the mail shortly after it arrived at Regt. He immediately sorted it at our Bn dump and turned it over to the Co property sergeants to take to the companies. Mail for the casualties was returned to the dump as soon as possible and there it was segregated into the different categories.

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UNCLASSIFIED TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

CASUALTY REPORT

DATE	KIA		W&E		SKE		WNE		MIA		TOTAL	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl	Off	Enl	Off	Enl	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
19Feb45	6	42	6	130		7	2	27		1	14	207
20Feb45	4	9	1	10		1		1			5	21
21Feb45		1		1		2		3				7
22Feb45				5		3		20				28
23Feb45		3		3		1		2				9
24Feb45				1		1						2
25Feb45				8								8
26Feb45	1	22	6	65	17		1	3			8	107
27Feb45		10		20	10			1				41
28Feb45		14	3	47	8			2			3	71
1Mar45		2						1				3
2Mar45		1		5	1							7
3Mar45		23	1	44	6		1	1			2	74
4Mar45	1	7		23	6			3			1	39
5Mar45		2		4								6
6Mar45												
7Mar45						1						1
8Mar45												
9Mar45				2	1			1				4
10Mar45		4		1	1							6
11Mar45		2		4	1							7
12Mar45		1	1	4	1						1	6
13Mar45		1		4				1				6
14Mar45				1								1
15Mar45		1		1								2
16Mar45												
17Mar45		1										1
Date Unknown		8				1						9
	12	154	18	383		69	4	66		1	34	673

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL LANDING TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX BAKER TO BLT 1/23 TO OPERA ON REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(INTELLIGENCE)

1. MAPS.

There were sufficient maps for indoctrination and study aboard ship and there were sufficient official maps for this operation. On a target of larger size where there would be more movement, there would be a greater dependence on the official map. When platoon leaders and company commanders became casualties, their maps are often lost with them. To remedy this, a wider distribution for the rifle companies should be made in the beginning and/or a large enough reserve carried to remedy this situation.

Suggest the official map be later than as of 15 October, 1944, in an operation where D-day is 19 February, 1945. The late G-2 map put out about one week before D-day was of little aid because it was printed on very poor quality paper that would last no more than three days in a company commander's pocket. Besides, there were not enough of them. Machine gun positions, except if known, should be left out of all maps. Put on the map only known installations; no guesses. There was a great unevenness of ground in the Division Zone of Action off the beaches which was not shown on the maps. To remedy this the map could be of larger scale, and/or a smaller contour interval.

PHOTOS.

They were ample enough but the greatest number were rather old (June, July, August, September, October) and they were mostly of poor or only fair quality. The enlarged obliques of the beaches were very helpful. We would like more obliques of terrain inland off the beaches. The practice of taking obliques and verticals of Division Zone of Action during the operation was most helpful and should be continued. Distribution must be wide enough to include rifle companies.

HYDROGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

Adequate. No other comment.

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ANNEX BAKER TO AL 1/23 TO OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). CONT'D.

2. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.

During the operation, this was accomplished in the battalion through the scouts attached to the companies, the rifle company personnel, and the battalion OP.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION.

On board ship before the operation, the section disseminated information on the enemy to the entire Landing Team. The Bn-2 lectured during the period to all men and officers aboard the AFA on the terrain, enemy defenses, and enemy capabilities. After D-day emphasis was placed on collecting information and disseminating the reports given to us by higher echelons. Because it is difficult for a small unit the size of a battalion to properly evaluate the information it collects, the practice of sending down to battalions a copy of each days D-2 Periodic Report and POW interrogations was of large aid to the battalion and shall be continued.

COMMUNICATIONS.

An SCR 300 radio for the Intelligence Section would not have been a great aid on this operation. However, a 300 radio on D-day with a separate intelligence net would have been most helpful. All radios were crowded that day with command messages and radio was our only method of communication with Regiment until that night. After D-day, the small or no distances moved made it easy to keep OP wire in to battalion CP, and on some days the companies, not moving, were in by wire from the night before. A great deal of enemy information came from companies over battalion radio or wire net, describing what is holding them up, firing on them, etc See recommendations.

LIAISON.

It was satisfactory within the Regiment. See recommendation

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TRAINING AND USE OF PERSONNEL.

All interpreters, officers and enlisted, were of aid and very cooperative. It was particularly helpful to have an interpreter attached to the battalion in the attack. Battalion scouts with the companies were extremely helpful. See recommendations on scouts. The battalion intelligence section is too small to be able to assimilate an "8 ball" and not feel it. It is understood that higher echelons are planning a stronger emphasis on classifying only competent personnel for intelligence sections. This is good and important.

3. PRISONERS.

They were not much trouble because (1) there were very few, (2) there was little distance involved in routing them back. Interrogation was conducted as near as possible to the point of capture. Prisoners report it was difficult to surrender: (1) We shoot at any Jap who exposes himself, (2) Surrender would show to others weakness in their "spiritual strength".

4. DOCUMENTS AND MATERIEL.

Recovery of documents made by all hands in battalion. Much cooperation was shown in this respect. No trouble in routing back. Heavy equipment handled by JICPOA teams.

5. PROPAGANDA.

Two Koreans surrendered to battalion holding surrender leaflets. They had followed the printed instructions to the letter. I do not know of the general effect of our propaganda.

6. COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE.

Our counter-intelligence measures worked well. No other comment.

7. PUBLIC RELATIONS.

No comment.

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LIEUTENANT BAKER 101/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

8. ENEMY ORGANIZATION.

No comment.

ENEMY TACTICS.

These are well known to everybody and were covered very adequately each day in the D-2 periodic Report. Without explanation in detail, I will enumerate the important features of enemy tactics noted by this Bn: elaborate use of caves and tunnels, mutually supporting weapons and pillboxes, use of tanks only for defense as gun positions, much use of large caliber mortars, refusal to make "banzai charges", defense of almost every inch of ground and intelligent use of terrain, extremely accurate rifle and machine-gun fire when we closed with their positions, a strong display of what the enemy would call his "spiritual strength". From the stores of food and ammunition at all positions and the buried cisterns of water at many convenient nearby points, it is evident that the enemy lived at his gun positions.

EQUIPMENT.

Ordnance equipment that had been known previously only from captured documents we found in large quantity on Iwo Jima, e.g., the hollow charge AT grenade, terra cotta mine and fuze used with it, extremely large mortars, large rockets (launchers were found on Leyte but it was believed they were not used). Iwo Jima being under command of the Imperial Staff might partly explain the presence of this new equipment, but it also indicates the importance the enemy attached to the defense of this island.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) A general criticism can be applied to all the information given us before the operation, maps, photos, studies, charts, etc. Disproportionate amount of attention was paid to the beaches as compared with the amount of information given on the northern end of the island.

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ANNEX BAKER TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

So far as the troops are concerned, if all supporting arms do their job well on the beaches prior to our landing, the troops will be off the beaches in a few hours. Our preponderance of naval gunfire on the beach makes it almost impossible for a landing to be halted at the waters edge. By the end of the first day, until the end of the operation, the troops are looking at the terrain off the beaches. It is felt that not enough information was distributed on that terrain. For instance, by far the greatest portion of the aerial photos were of the beaches. I do not advocate less information on the beaches, but more information on terrain and enemy installations inland.

(b) T.O. should be changed to allow three (3) scouts per company increasing the strength of the section from twelve (12) enlisted to sixteen (16) enlisted. The work done by the scouts in this battalion was invaluable. However, three casualties among the scouts left us with one scout in each of two companies, and the third company did not have any. The trio of scouts in each company could be used on missions of their own, patrols, investigations, etc. One scout could return to the OP or CP with more information without seriously reducing the effectiveness of the remaining two. Casualties would not be felt so heavily. The battalion section is so small now, it cannot afford to have a single casualty without seriously affecting its work.

(c) An SCR 300 radio and four SCR 536 radios would be very welcome, though a radio was not needed on Iwo Jima. The 300 would be essential for OP communications in a fast moving situation. The "536's" would aid in communication between the groups of company scouts and the OP. These "536's" should be on a different channel from any other 536 channel in the battalion.

(d) In future operations, prisoners will undoubtedly be a greater problem than they were on Iwo Jima. A Jap language school should begin as soon as possible and for as long as possible for all intelligence personnel (except those hopeless in learning the language). Selected personnel from the rifle companies ought to be included.

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ANNEX BAKER TO RPT 1/23 OPERATIONS REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

(e) When schools are begun by either Regiment or Division, the entire battalion intelligence section should be instructed in the same subjects. Because of the smallness of the section, versatility in the personnel is essential. There should be no specialized training for small groups in the section other than that accomplished in the battalion in training the scouts, the OP group, and CP group.

(f) It is suggested that an officer from the D-2 section contact the Bn-2's each day the battalion is in the attack. The Bn-2 should then bring him up to the battalion OP. The regiment and battalions have the same picture of the terrain and enemy defense of it because their OP's are close enough to give them the same picture. A written report to the D-2 section will never describe adequately the terrain and enemy defense unless a representative from the section goes forward and sees it for himself. A visit to the battalion CP is not sufficient. The representative should be prepared to stay several hours at the battalion OP so that the proper picture for that day can be observed.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX CHARLIE TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).
OPERATIONS

1. It should be noted that the regular operations officer was killed on D-night. On D plus 1, a new operations officer was transferred to the battalion from regiment and took over that job as an unacquainted member of the way that staff had previously operated.
2. The following recommendations are felt to be worthy of consideration although several have been noted after past operations:
 - a. That operation orders and overlays for the following day be issued prior to darkness, this is particularly important where there is a change in the Zone of Action or direction of the attack. Company commanders seldom have a place available to study a map after dark. If nothing more than the Zone of Action, the time of King hour, and the probable attachments could be given it would be of considerable assistance.
 - b. That the order to dig in for the night be given by 1600. This permits time for an agreement by battalion commanders on where the flanks will tie in. It also allows for movement of the reserve company to good supporting positions and gives the companies time to complete the defensive set up with proper wire installations prior to darkness. Men can eat and supplies for the night be in the position by dusk in case of enemy counterattack. It also allows time for a conference of the company commanders and the battalion commander concerning the continuation of the attack for the next day.
 - c. That artillery preparation fired prior to King hour be controlled and registered by attached forward observers. Fires can be brought in much closer and placed on positions from which enemy fire had been previously received.
 - d. That all staffs up to and including divisions issuing orders for the attack, have visual knowledge of the ground over which the attacking is to be done. Maps and photos have proved

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ANNEX CHARLIE TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

to be inadequate.

e. That the attack by units receiving fire from key positions (i.e. Hill 382) be held up until the key position is reduced. Men were shot in the back from Hill 382 as they advanced beyond it. No real gain was made until the Hill had been reduced.

f. That the advance of a unit be limited by a thorough mopping up in its area if there is no opposition. Bypassed enemy machine guns and pillboxes in the 3d Marine Division area caused this BLT many casualties.

g. That men's lives not be jeopardized merely to bury dead Japs and salvage material, when it can be accomplished at a later date with no risk.

h. That replacements be organized into platoons and trained under their own platoon leader. When replacements are needed an entire platoon which has trained together can then be added to the company. The system used on Iwo Jima did not give replacements or leaders time to know one another by sight. Many experienced men were lost trying to get the replacements to do the correct thing since it was necessary for experienced men to overexpose themselves to do it.

i. That larger collecting sections be attached or that replacements available for stretcher teams or carrying parties be given each BLT. At times the companies were so depleted in personnel that they could not furnish men for either duty.

j. That the tank platoon leader report to the BLT at least one hour prior to the earliest use of his tanks. This is to find out what the desired employment for the day is and to confer with the company commander in that Zone of Action.

3. The portable flame thrower was efficient and proved its value.

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ANNEX CHARLIE TO BPT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

The flame thrower tank when having available and adequate roads, was extremely effective. Companies recommended that the flame thrower tanks have a distinctive marking so that they could be recognized.

4. The infantry tank coordination was not adequate. The phones on the rear of the tanks seldom were in working order. The use of a SCR 300 on the BLT channel clogged up necessary communications and was not satisfactory. The use of the RCT channel worked better but tanks could not listen to BLT net. Company commanders found it difficult to find the leader of the tanks and to communicate to him what he desired the tanks to do. This lack of coordination was the cause of dissatisfaction on the part of both the infantry and the tanks.

5. Enemy anti-tank measures were effective. Enemy tanks were found dug in and used as anti-tank weapons. The enemy not only covered well placed mine fields with AT guns but also with small arms which protected the AT guns and prevented the engineers from clearing the mine fields.

6. War dogs were satisfactory for night defense. It was felt that they would have been more valuable if permitted to be used during mopping up phase to investigate caves and to locate the enemy in the rough terrain which afforded many hiding places.

7. The new 7.2 rocket used by the 3rd Marine Division was considered by the company commanders to be a devastating weapon which they would have liked to have had available in several instances.

8. The use of cannister by the enemy was encountered for the first time. It was deadly and effective. The balls did not spread until about 100 yards from the gun and acted somewhat like shrapnel from time fire.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
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IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

SUPPLY

1. ADEQUACY OF MOUNTING OUT SUPPLIES.

CLASS I.

(a) Rations of all types were adequate for the period. Type 10-in-1 was available in sufficient quantities for full issue at any time the Bn was in a rear area. The new type "C" ration was not issued to this organization. It is an excellent type ration and comparable with 10-in-1 in popularity with the troops. It does not have the sanitation problems of the 10-in-1 and can be carried in the attack.

(b) Water: Consumption of water in the attack was at a fairly low level. During cool weather it was no more than one canteen per man per day. The water supply was sufficient at all times and was available for washing and bathing when in rear areas.

(c) Components of "B" rations: The fruits, fruit juices, coffee, etc., supplied were excellent and contributed considerably to the morale and health of the troops. Fruits and juices were not always available for full daily issue, but would make one issue for every second or third day. Coffee was made in the rear area twice daily after about D plus 11 and delivered to the troop's positions. The doughnuts furnished by division were easy to handle and very much appreciated by troops in the line.

CLASS II.

(a) Clothing: Mounting out supplies at Pearl Harbor were adequate except for shoes. Due to the long period spent aboard ship, some shoes were worn out by the time we reached the target and the men were not carrying extra pairs. An extra issue of socks was made at the staging area. Twelve pair of the Army type field shoe (with extended uppers and straps) were issued before the Opn for testing.

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ANNEX DOG TO BLT 123 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

These proved ideal in eliminating the use of leggings and giving added ankle support. The assault companies depended upon the landing of their shelter half rolls with blanket, flannel shirt, and jacket on D plus 1 or D plus 2. They were not landed for several days, leaving them with little protection. Some wore jackets or flannel shirts ashore on D-day.

(b) Individual Equipment: The Bn was fully equipped at Pearl Harbor except for BAR belts and double web pockets for carbine magazines.

(c) Individual Weapons: A few BARs had pitted bores. All other weapons were serviceable.

(d) Organizational weapons: All serviceable and in good condition.

CLASS III.

(a) Lubricants: Oil for the individual weapon was not available in 8 ounce cans at Pearl Harbor, but in 1 quart size. The resupply with small cans was not made until about D plus ten. This created a shortage of oil for individual weapons in the initial stages, resulting in some fouled weapons. All other lubricants were adequate at all times.

(b) Fuels: Adequate at all times.

CLASS IV.

(a) Adequate throughout the period. Concertinas were not used extensively, but were available to the companies. Many times the area to their front was inaccessible for the laying of concertinas or the construction of protective wire. There was never a need for barbed wire and pickets in this operation. Additional sandbags were needed in the initial stages. They were used in rear areas and were not available to the front lines after D plus 1.

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ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

CLASS V.

(a) All initial ammunition supplies were adequate.

2. RE-SUPPLY.

CLASS I.

(a) Rations and PX supplies were adequate throughout the operation.

CLASS II.

(a) Clothing: Re-supply of clothing on D plus 10 day gave all men a serviceable set and in many cases a complete change. Badly worn shoes were replaced. The Army type wool sock proved satisfactory for foot protection and long wear. These are far superior to the cotton socks issued on the re-supply, but the wool type was available in the initial stages.

(b) Individual equipment: Rifle companies and the Bn Aid station retrieved essential items from casualties. Shortages were issued from salvage gear. The items not supplied were ponchos, carbine magazines, carbine magazine pouches, mortar ammunition carrying bags, and bazooka ammunition carrying bags.

(c) Individual weapons: Unserviceable weapons were turned over to division orance and traded for serviceable weapons. At no time was there a shortage. BARs were picked up from all casualty BAR men.

(d) Organizational weapons: All but two HMGs were lost on D-day and were only partially re-supplied. All other weapons were maintained in the Bn dump when companies were unable to man them.

CLASS III.

(a) Lubricants: Oil for individual weapons was adequate only after D plus 11 when re-supply arrived. For vehicles it was adequate at all times.

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

CLASS IV.

(a) Adequate throughout.

CLASS V.

(a) All types ammunition were readily re-supplied except 81mm mortar and all types illumination. This was short only in the final stages. Demolitions and materials for preparing charges were available as needed. It is believed that the offensive type hand grenade would have been effective in mopping up caves and that the use of it should be revived.

3. SHORE PARTY.

Beach YELLOW ONE was heavily shelled D-day and normal Shore Party installations were rendered inoperative. Tanks and bulldozers were the only vehicles able to move inland. LVTs did not have cleared routes or sufficient cover. Small boats beached with floating dump loads (flame thrower and emergency ammunition). There was no attempt made to unload them and they broached. There was still no attempt made while they were broached so ammunition had to be carried by hand from the boats to forward positions. All other equipment was "swamped" in the sand and pulled out D plus 1 or D plus 2. The Shore Party installations were taken under Regt control on D plus 1.

4. SALVAGE AND SALVAGE COLLECTION.

(a) Water and fuel containers: 5 gallon cans were salvaged nearly 100%. All other containers were salvaged 100%.

(b) Individual equipment and weapons: Work began on D plus 2 and was continued through the operation. Each company left one or two men behind when they changed position and all equipment was picked up. What was needed was issued and the rest turned in to division salvage.

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ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

(c) Clothing: When clothing was issued D plus 11, dirty clothes were collected. There was not time nor ample facilities for washing so it was turned over to salvage. Most of this clothing was serviceable. If Div or Regt could provide the facilities, the clothing could be returned to the organization for re-issue. If this is not feasible, it should be taken to the rest base and issued back to the organization as extra clothing.

5. CAPTURED MATERIAL AND CAPTURED MATERIAL COLLECTION.

(a) Captured material consisted of documents, dog tags and other light articles. These were all handled by the intelligence section and created no problem. JICPOA teams picked up all heavy weapons in our zone of action.

6. TRANSPORTATION.

D-day all wheeled transportation bogged down on the beach and all supplies were carried from the beach. The weasel would have been invaluable as a cargo carrier on a beach of this type. One jeep was damaged when it sank in the sand, but was salvaged and repaired. None of the vehicles were knocked out.

Jeeps and trailers were adequate after D-day and worked very well in supplying units of the Bn at any point on the island of Iwo Jima. The rocket launcher mounted on a jeep did not prove practical for Bn use. This would tie up one cargo jeep if full organizational vehicles were needed for supply.

7. EFFICIENCY OF SUPPLY COMMUNICATION.

(a) Supply communications were excellent. The Bn dump had a phone in the switchboard and companies could call direct. The Cos had phone communication during the attack most of the time and radio contact at other times with Bn-4 at the CP. This system was ideal and without these excellent communications, supply would have been made much more difficult.

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ANNEX DOCUMENT 101/53 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA). (CONT'D).

8. RECOMMENDATIONS.

- (a) Availability of the new type "C" rations to assault troops.
- (b) Making of sandwiches once each day for assault troops.
- (c) Use of the Army type field shoe.
- (d) A plastic (or similar substance) BAR magazine that could be discarded after use. Many stoppages were due to rusty magazines and sand or dirt fouling in the magazine.
- (e) Two weasels per Bn to get ashore D-day if operating on sandy terrain.
- (f) Revive the use of the offensive hand grenade.
- (g) Do not take barbed wire and pickets on an operation of this type.
- (h) Discontinue mounting rocket launchers on jeeps for the infantry Bns or replace this jeep with another cargo jeep.

APPENDICES:

- #1 - Transport Quartermaster Report.
- #2 - Medical Report.
- #3 - Burial Report.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

APPENDIX ONE TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

TRANSPORT QUARTERMASTER

The cargo aboard the U.S.S. Newberry was loaded so that any supplies called for from the beach could be quickly unloaded. The actual loading time for the slowest hold was thirteen and one-half hours.

On D-day, about 20% of the total cargo was loaded into two LCMs, fourteen LCVPs and one LSM. All of these supplies were high priority cargo except the vehicles in the LSM. Many of the LCVPs were still unable to unload three days later, because of the surf and when they did land there was no one to handle cargo on the beach.

Fourteen of the ship's eighteen LCVPs were lost on the beach in the first four days, along with most of their cargo. About 90% of the total cargo reached the beach in LCTs or LSMs. On D plus 5, when general unloading was ordered, the ship was 53% unloaded. The last of the cargo was loaded into an LSMs at 0900 on D plus 6. The actual unloading time for the seven days was about ten hours.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

MEDICAL

1. EMBARKATION: Medical personnel were embarked as follows:

- 1 Medical officer on APA.
- 1 Medical Officer on LST.
- 4 Company Aid Men on each of 3 LSTs.
- 3 Company Aid men on APA.
- 14 Battalion Aid Men on APA, transferred to LST at staging area.
- 14 Battalion Aid Men remained on APA.
- 14 Collection Section men from C Medical Company on APA.
- 2 Ambulance drivers on APA.

2. ABOARD SHIP.

(a) Sick call was moderate aboard ship with the chief problems being colds, fungus infections of the feet, and heat rash with a few cases of pediculosis pubis which were quickly cleared up with D.D.T.

(b) Sanitary conditions: Heads and living quarters were kept clean and sanitary at all times.

The ventilation aboard the APA was definitely not adequate. Furthermore, upon many occasions, the men were kept below with hatches dogged and the blowers turned off because of One Able and General Quarters Drills. At one time, Condition One Able was maintained for three hours while the ship was waiting for target planes to appear and for an hour more while firing was in progress. Two men fainted in the galley and men all over the ship were exceedingly uncomfortable. General Quarters were held at 0500 daily and the blowers turned off. This caused all personnel who did not arise at that hour, to wake up feeling that they had not rested at all. At best, conditions aboard a transport are none too good and it would seem that men going into combat should be given every opportunity to get adequate rest.

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Messes: The mess was adequate as to the quality and quantity of the food.

Galleys: The galley was kept clean and sanitary.

Cooks and messmen: These men were examined by a Medical Officer periodically during the voyage.

(c) Special Precautions: Daily inspections of living quarters, messes, and galleys were made by the Commanding Officer, accompanied by the Medical Officer.

3. DEBARKATION.

(a) Personnel: Five (5) company aid men with each company landed with their respective platoons.

Fourteen (14) battalion aid men and one (1) Medical Officer landed in an LVT in the 6th Wave.

Fourteen (14) battalion aid men and one (1) Medical Officer landed in an LCVF in the 6th wave.

Fourteen (14) collection section men landed in an LCM in the 8th Wave.

Two (2) ambulance drivers landed in an LCM with the ambulance jeep on D plus five.

(b) Material: Each Medical Officer carried a complete Unit One.

All corpsmen carried a standard Unit Three with extra dressings, 3 sutures with needle attached in ampoules, 2 units Serum Albumen, Aspirin, Soda Mint and C.C. pills. Each corpsmen carried 10 bottles of Brandy.

Sixteen battalion aid men carried sea bags, each containing 4 units of Plasma, 1 case Serum Albumen, assorted dressings, Morphine, fifty packets sulfa powder and two cartons of brandy.

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

(10) Ten battalion aid men carried twelve folding type stretchers ashore.

Two battalion aid men carried one case of splints ashore.

The floating dump consisted of two cases of Plasma and eight cases of stretchers.

The ambulance jeep was combat loaded with two cases of Plasma, four cases of stretchers, Unit 5A containing usual sick bay drugs, plus a stethoscope, ear syringe, 10cc syringe and instrument roll. One extra standard Unit 5A was landed.

(c) Losses of Personnel and Material.

Personnel: On D-day, 3 corpsmen were killed in action, and 16 corpsmen wounded and evacuated. Subsequently, 3 corpsmen were killed in action and 12 corpsmen wounded and evacuated.

Material: Eight (8) sea bags were lost on D-day. Some of these were probably abandoned, but most of them were demolished by shell fire.

4. ASHORE-ASSAULT PHASE.

(a) Medical Installations: The two havles of the aid station landed at approximately the same time and began functioning immediately, just behind the second terrace. This was a particularly hazardous spot and many casualties were suffered by the aid station. Early in the day we could not displace forward because the front lines had not moved ahead, and later because of casualties which would not be evacuated due to the lack of boats, and which we naturally could not leave unattended.

In the later stages of the operation, the aid station was always set up just to the rear of the CP near the road. Thus the CP communications could be utilized and the CP and the aid station could join together for perimeter defense at night.

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

Natural cover and concealment were utilized at all times. Fortunately dugouts of sufficient size were at hand on several occasions. The possibility of establishing a forward aid station was kept in mind but the situation was always such that the casualties could be taken from the point at which a forward aid station might be established to the main aid station in a matter of not more than five minutes. Plasma and Serum Albumen were kept on the jeep at all times in the event that a case might need immediate treatment. It was felt that it was better to risk a few minutes time in order to get the patient back to the aid station where there was less danger to himself and to the medical personnel than to set up a forward aid station.

(b) Hospitalization: This unit was not concerned with hospitalization.

(c) Evacuation: Evacuation was effected entirely by litter teams in the early stages. These litter teams often picked up patients at the front, brought them to the aid station, and then took them down to the beach and loaded them on boats if possible. Understandably, evacuation was not adequate on D-day.

In the latter stages of the operation, evacuation was as follows: The Marines were usually able to get the wounded back to the company command post, and this helped immeasurably in evacuation, otherwise stretcher teams would have had to search over very difficult terrain to find the casualties. It is many times more hazardous for a group of men coming up from the Battalion CP and not knowing exactly where the wounded are, or where enemy fire is coming from, to go out and get a patient than it is for a group of men who are already there to bring a wounded man back to the company command post. I do not intend to minimize the heroic work done by Marines but merely to point out the advantage of having wounded men brought to the company command post or at least to some definite location which the stretcher party can easily find.

Stretcher parties made up of Marines from the CP plus QM personnel and corpsmen did go up to the lines whenever necessary, of course. Much heroic work was done by these teams in front of Hill 382 and at Airfield #2, where it seemed that only a miracle prevented

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

their being hit as they ran across one hundred or more yards of flat open ground swept by enemy machine gun fire that kept all but the most essential movement at a standstill. Evacuation was by jeep ambulance from the nearest point it could approach. Ambulance service was always adequate.

(d) Casualties treated: This unit treated 568 casualties. Of this number 30 were retained at the aid station and subsequently returned to duty. Four casualties died in our aid station. 503 casualties were evacuated from the aid station.

Types of casualties:

(1) Head wounds.....	73
(2) Chest wounds.....	42
(3) Abdominal wounds.....	48
(4) Wounds of Extremities	173
(5) Concussion.....	47
(6) Combat Fatigue.....	60
(7) Burns.....	3
(8) Multiple Wounds.....	122

(e) Sanitation: Disposal of excreta by individual holes while the men were on the line and by straddle trenches and "portable" type heads in rear areas. Heads were periodically sprayed with insecticide and D.D.T. in reserve areas. A hand spray of insect repellent was used in the company areas while the troops were waiting to be withdrawn from the northern end of the island.

Food: The food was excellent in quantity and quality on this operation and it is our opinion that this did much to lessen fatigue and maintain morale. There were decidedly less men who came to the sick bay complaining of "blacking out" or of "feeling weak and dizzy" than there were on Saipan. The addition of coffee and doughnuts, and fruit juices was an excellent way to give variety and add much needed vitamins to a diet of rations that at best becomes monotonous very quickly. It is our opinion that 10-in-1 rations should be used whenever possible. However, the men still need to be impressed with the necessity of throwing away any food opened but not eaten.

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DCG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

Water: Only very rarely was the water not palatable and water supplies were always adequate.

(f) Disposal of Dead: Our dead were quickly removed by burial parties which went out under fire to get them. Enemy dead were covered with earth, but never to a sufficient depth as the odor persisted and flies collected on top of the mounds.

(g) Epidemics: There were about sixty (60) cases of diarrhea on the last day ashore, presumably caused by spoiled left over food. All these cases responded quickly to paregoric and bismuth.

(h) Dental service: An occasional toothache was treated in the aid station with Eugenol, codeine and aspirin. One man was sent to the division hospital for dental treatment.

(i) Care of Civilians: None encountered.

(j) Prisoners of War: One prisoner was treated by the battalion aid station for conjunctivitis and multiple scratches on his face.

(k&l) Medical Organization and Personnel: The present medical organization of the battalion has too many men in camp and not enough in combat if heavy casualties are suffered among the hospital corpsmen. The system of attaching men from a medical company for battalion aid, but not company aid duty makes it necessary to send highly trained PhMlc's to do first aid in the companies while keeping less experienced men of lower rate in the aid station to do work that requires much more technique. It is true that any replacements among the company aid men should have had some experience and if possible should know the men they are to work with.

One solution would be to reduce the number of men permanently attached to each battalion and set up a divisional pool of men to get special company aid training. The battalions could then draw on this pool for men to go on problems at camp and when in combat the battalions could draw men as needed. This would also tend to keep each battalion supplied with just the number of men needed.

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

(m) Field Medical Equipment: An instrument roll, an ear syringe a stethoscope, and three syringes with needles were carried and these were adequate.

(n) Medical Supplies: The following amounts were carried: Plasma, 40 units; Serum Albumen, 12 units; Morphine, 50 boxes; Sulfa packets, 20 cartons; stretchers, 16; Brandy, 48 cartons; Assorted dressings, (Unit 7), 16; Unit 5A (made to order), 1; Unit 5A (Standard), 1.

Losses: About 1/3 of the medical supplies were lost D-day.

Re-supply: This unit was adequately re-supplied from the beach.

(o) Motor Vehicles: One jeep ambulance was supplied by C Medical Company. Others were available on call from Regiment. Ambulance was adequate at all times.

(p) Quartermaster Supplies: These supplies were adequate. Cigarettes, candy, soap, razors, and chewing gum were supplied. Water for bathing and washing clothes and even hot water for shaving was supplied in reserve area. New clothing was issued when needed.

(q) Malaria and Epidemic Control Equipment and Supplies: A hand spray of insecticide and three 5 lb. cans of D.D.T. were obtained from Regiment for use in the reserve area.

5. ASHORE-AFTER COMPLETION OF ASSAULT PHASE: Nothing to add.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

(1) Troop transports should have better ventilation systems.

(2) Ventilators should not be turned off during One Able and General Quarters Drills aboard troop transports. Furthermore, these drills should not be made unusually lengthy if the hatches are to be doeged during the heat of the day.

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APPENDIX TWO TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

- (3) The number of Hospital Corpsmen permanently attached to a Battalion should be reduced and a divisional pool of lower rated men with company aid experience should be established to be drawn upon as needed by the battalions in combat.
- (4) Every Hospital Corpsmen should receive training in venapuncture and suturing.
- (5) Every Hospital Corpsmen should carry at least three ampoules containing suture with needle attached for suturing chest wounds.
- (6) All company aid men should carry Serum Albumen.
- (7) Whole blood should be made available to battalion aid stations, possibly in dry ice containers.
- (8) Plasma should be issued chiefly in 250 cc containers as this is often sufficient.
- (9) There should be a special setup at the Division Hospital to care for minor wounds, furuncles, etc.
- (10) Brandy issues should be more liberal. At least 1 bottle per man should be available D-day.
- (11) Old type "C" rations should not be issued in combat.
- (12) The battalion sick bay, at camp, is not adequate as to size, equipment, or as to medical supplies.
- (13) The battalion surgeon should be given the opportunity to promote his own men in combat for meritorious achievement.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
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APPENDIX THREE TO ANNEX DOG TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

BURIAL

The burial officer was wounded on D-day and on the 21st of February a burial NCO was appointed to take his place. This man then reported to regiment for duty with the regimental burial officer. For the next five days he was assisted by 15 men from the battalion. When we moved up into the assault again we detailed a regular burial party of five men which remained at this job until the end of the operation.

The main job of this detail was to move the bodies to a place where the division burial party could pick them up.

The burial party worked very well until toward the end of the operation when they were unable to remove bodies due to sniper fire.

At the end of the operation the dead of this battalion had been buried as follows:

1 man in the 3rd Marine Division Cemetery
142 men in the 4th Marine Division Cemetery
11 men in the 5th Marine Division Cemetery
8 men buried at sea.
4 men not buried as of 16 March, 1945.

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM ONE,
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM TWENTY THREE,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
IN CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ANNEX EASY TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).
(COMMUNICATION)

SECTION ONE - PRELIMINARY TRAINING AND PLANNING

- A. Training
1. Msg Cn Section
 - a. Field Msg Cn in constant Operation.
 - b. Training in use of shackle and other codes
 - c. Training of Personnel in other communication duties
 2. Wire Section
 - a. CPX
 - b. Training Problems (Ship to Shore, Field)
 - c. Switchboard in constant operation
 - d. Training of personnel in tele-radio procedure
 - e. Special speed and accuracy schools in splicing, tying, etc.
 - f. Emergency maintenance of equipment in the field
 3. Radio Section
 - a. CPX
 - b. Training Problems (Ship to Shore, Field)
 - c. Voice and CW procedure training
 - d. Specialized training of NCS operators
 - e. Training of personnel in switchboard operation and splicing
 - f. Emergency maintenance of equipment in the field
 4. Platoon
 - a. Personnel shifted to duties best qualified for
 - b. Platoon, section and team coordination stressed
- B. Planning
1. Msg Cn Section
 - a. Supply of blank shackle forms and msg books obtained in 90 day excess

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23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

CONT'D.

- b. Msg books, panels, and pyrotechnics issued to proper authorities
- c. Special instructions given to all companies and unit msgms.
- d. Instructions on SCR 536 and 300 operation given to company commanders and platoon leaders.

2. Wire Section

- a. Sufficient Supply of necessary equipment obtained in 90 day excess
- b. Unnecessary equipment for storage for shipment
- c. Necessary equipment for operation ready
- d. Wire Jeep and trailer readied and packed with emergency equipment for continued phases of the operation
- e. Responsible men schooled in duties of NCO's in event of casualties

3. Radio Section

- a. Sufficient Supply of necessary equipment obtained in 90 day excess
- b. All equipment serviced and readied
- c. Responsible men schooled in duties of NCO's in event of casualties
- d. Two radio jeeps serviced and packed with emergency equipment necessary for continued phases of the operation

SECTION TWO - MOVEMENT TO OBJECTIVE

A.

Ship-board Training

- 1. Establishment of Msg Cen and a Telephone central
 - a. All personnel participated in their operation as part of training
- 2. Daily schools on all phases of communications
- 3. Detailed schooling on objective
- 4. All changes to communications plan caused by type of objective were made and the men were schooled accordingly
- 5. Assignment of immediate responsible equipment to each man
- 6. Special attention given to maintenance of all equipment regularly

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ANNEX EASY TO BET 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

7. Men and equipment were assigned accordingly to provide for a complete CP echelon in each boat

B. Forward Area Rehearsal

1. Troops carried out tactical plans similiar to the operation
2. Special attention given to coordination of Radio Nets while afloat prior to landing
3. All defects of equipment noted and proper action taken
4. All necessitated changes due to tactical plan in placement of equipment and personnel made

SECTION THREE - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION

A. Assault of Beachhead

On D-day our echelons of communication personnel debarked with all necessary equipment. The battalion SCR 300 (Channel 14) and the Regimental SCR 300 (Channel 3) radio nets were immediately established. An SCR 610 was set up in free boats 1 and 2 on a Regimental Listening watch. A TCS radio was operated by our personnel in free boat 3 and was in direct communication with our rear echelon TCS radio on board ship and regiment. Prior to landing these 610's were secured, the TCS sedured upon landing. All other nets remained on the air.

On the beach our personnel were widely scattered. A CP was established from one of our boat echelons. A 610, TBX and 300 were in communication with Regiment and a 300 in communication with our companies. All personnel were quickly collected and we organized and all equipment was checked and losses noted. Much telephone and radio equipment was lost on the beach due to the inability of the men to move with it quickly under fire on such difficult terrain. Inter company communication was maintained by SCR 536. Wire communication to our shore party was established but heavy artillery and mortar fire made it impossible for this to be maintained for any length of time. Our TBX-8 was rendered useless by concussion from enemy artillery fire. The 610's withstood the same concussion well.

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OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

The first evening a switchboard was established with wire communication to all companies, Regiment and our shore party checked regularly every fifteen minutes. All radios remained on the air all night. Inter company communication was maintained by sound powered telephone and 536 radio. All lines remained intact except the shore party. During the night our Bn-10 and the Msg Cn Chief were killed. Responsible men were moved up, from within the platoon, to perform these casualties duties. Our training along these lines proved then to be of great value and no confusion resulted therefrom.

B. Reserve Area Communication

Once in reserve we established wire communication to all units and maintained it 24 hours a day. Much trouble occurred from tank traffic and artillery fire. Radio communication to Regiment was via 300 and 610. We reequipped, thoroughly reorganized in preparation for the attack. Our equipment which had been lost or destroyed was replaced with the exception of the TBX without which we operated efficiently. We received two replacement radiomen to supplement the casualties sustained in that section.

C. Communications in the Assault

When we again proceeded into the attack, wire communication was maintained only to Regiment. SCR 300 and 610 communications were maintained with Regiment with the 610 handling the bulk of the traffic. SCR 300 communication was maintained to the companies, the mortar platoon operating a 300 on the same channel for emergency uses. Communication to the attached units such as rockets, tanks and so forth was established on the battalion 300 net. This tended to overcrowd this net and greatly decreased its efficiency. Shore party communications was obtained by wire via Regiment.

At night wire lines were laid to all units and the battalion 300 secured until wire went out. Lines were checked regularly but no repair work was done. All other radios remained on the air. All deficient equipment was surveyed directly to Regiment and we received immediate replacement therefrom. This system proved very good in all instances especially when equipment was

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ANNEX EASY TO BLT 1/23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA) CONT'D.

urgently needed. Lateral communications between companies was established by wire with each company having its separate telephone. This system worked well. In instances when the days assault was to be less than 1000 yards, wire lines were maintained to companies. This required the use of test stations to speed up the repairing of these lines when trouble occurred. Frequent trouble occurred from mortar fire.

D. Routine Communication Activities

During the entire operation daily casualties and equipment reports were submitted to Regiment. All attached units such as, artillery, NGF teams and Air Liaison teams received shackle codes daily and were lent urgently needed equipment when necessary. Close contact and cooperation with other units' communication officers was maintained at all times.

SECTION FOUR - COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Comments

1. SCR 300's and 610's proved excellent
2. Wire w/130 was used extensively and proved well
3. Sound powered telephones and SCR 536 radios highly commended
4. Wire communications carried the majority of the traffic
5. Enemy mortar and artillery fire was the direct cause of the majority of the trouble on wire lines
6. Sand in switchboards and telephones caused repeated failure of them and necessitated frequent cleaning
7. Nightly wire nets became very complicated when the number of attached units was great
8. Small switchboard of 7 units weighing 5 to 10 pounds built by us proved very efficient in all instances
9. Lateral wire communication between companies at night proved efficient
10. Direct lines to company CP's greatly decreased the traffic on battalion 300
11. Battalion 300 channel overcrowded by attached units

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12. Untrained personnel should not be transferred to a battalion before combat unless the battalion will have time to train them

B. Recommendations.

1. 50% replacements of SCR 536's
2. 100% replacements on sound powered telephones
3. 1 BD-72 switchboard allowed each battalion
4. Separate 300 channel assigned each battalion mortar platoon
5. Frequent reports on present status of all wire lines should be exchanged between Regiment and battalion wire chiefs daily
6. Signal Corporals of each company should receive one months training with the communication platoon in semaphore, wire splicing and SCR 300 and 536 operation and emergency maintenance
7. The communication guide for commanders and staff officers proved excellent.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima).

Battalion Landing Team 2/23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima).

SECTION I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION:

The advanced planning for the Iwo Jima Operation commenced on 31 October, 1944, upon receipt of RCT 23 Operation Plan Number 4B-44(Trng.). The initial plan was known as "X" Island Problem.

This planning period was characterized by a series of conferences between the BLT Commander and certain members of the RCT staff. Initially, the knowledge of the pending operation as contained in the "X" Problem was limited to only those officers requiring the information for planning purposes. After the study of available intelligence data on beach characteristics and terrain, BLT 2/23 Operation Plan Number 7-44(Trng.) for the "X" Island Problem was completed on 2 November, 1944.

The idea of the "X" Island Operation has great merit. It permits staff study and planning for a proposed operation far enough in advance so as to eliminate much of the normal pressure in the final preparation of orders for an amphibious operation. It further enables lower units to decide on a basic scheme of maneuver and outline the tentative employment of supporting arms.

It is recommended that a similar plan be adopted for the advance planning phase of future operations.

As a direct result of advance knowledge of the target area and its characteristics, certain specialized training was directed by higher echelon. Tactical dispersion of troops was emphasized and a great deal of stress was put on camouflage of equipment and command post installations. Further specialized training was conducted in demolitions, detection and removal of mines, obstacles, and the assault and reduction of fortified positions by the combined use of flamethrower, bazooka and demolition teams.

Prior to the planning for the operation a comprehensive schedule of basic and advanced training had been carried out by the troops then available. However, the need for replacements to bring rifle companies up to full strength reduced the potential

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Annex C-1 of BCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

benefits of this training. The troops then available (approximately 50% of authorized strength) were so thoroughly trained that each man was capable of operating several infantry weapons in combat. Special training was initiated on the flamethrower, bazooka and demolitions. In addition familiarization instruction was conducted on the 37mm AT gun and the 75mm Halftrack of R/W Company. As a result of the training, each man, in addition to thorough training on his normal weapon, was qualified to perform a combat mission with any one of the above weapons. Unit training from the fire group up to battalion and BLT was carried out, both in field exercises and actual firing problems. Again, the full value of this training was lost because of the need for replacements in officers and men.

A series of command post exercises and map problems were injected by higher echelon into the training routine for the purpose of perfecting staff coordination and functioning. For the most part the problems were based on preconceived notions of long advances against light opposition; insufficient realism was evidenced that would benefit the lower units. It is recommended that exercises of this nature be planned sufficiently in advance to permit actual employment of troops in the problem with as much realism and stress on actual combat conditions as is possible. In this manner lower unit commanders are given full opportunity to improve staff operations, make rapid decisions on the spot, maneuver troops on the ground and coordinate the actual use of supporting arms.

Preliminary amphibious training was conducted during the period 15-19 November, 1944, at Maalsea Bay, Maui, T.H. BLT 2/23 loaded and embarked on APA 190 (USS Pickens) on 15 November. The training consisted of alternate drills and landings using LCV(P)s, LCMs and LVTs pre-loaded on three LSTs.

In general, the main purpose of this amphibious exercise was for the training of newly assigned shore party personnel of the 133d NC Battalion, and further, for the indoctrination of inexperienced Navy personnel (coxswains, guides and landing craft

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

control personnel). In as much as this battalion was operating at reduced strength, and further, since only a skeleton BLT was employed, this preliminary amphibious training was of little value to the assault combat elements that participated, though considerable benefit was derived by Shore Party and Naval personnel.

Approximately four weeks prior to the date of scheduled embarkation for final amphibious rehearsal, this battalion was only 67% of authorized strength. A pressing need was experienced at this time for replacements (33%), to fill in key assignments such as platoon leaders, machine gunners, mortar men, BAR men and assistant BAR men; bazooka and flamethrower men. On 22 November, 1944, only a little over four weeks prior to embarkation, this battalion received 6 officers and 298 enlisted men to be absorbed within the rifle companies. Needless to say, the period between assignment of these replacements and the date for embarkation (31 December), did not allow sufficient time to permit complete training of these men for the tasks they would be called on to perform in combat. An absolute minimum of three months of indoctrination and comprehensive training with the organization is mandatory for replacements in order to mold a strong, efficient, fighting team. Four weeks is hardly enough time for unit commanders to acquaint themselves with their men much less to train and assign personnel to responsible jobs within the units. Battles are won by the men in the squads and platoons and full opportunity should be provided for the training of these elements.

Inexperienced and untrained troops in combat impose a severe handicap on the small unit commanders. The untrained man in combat labors under the added burden of not knowing what to do at the proper time for his own protection or for the safety of his fellow combatants.

The actual final planning for the Iwo Jima operation was carried out simultaneously with the hasty training of replacements, the preparation of loading and embarkation plans and the preparation of rehearsal and operation orders.

On 26 December, 1944, the first tentative draft, BLT 2/23 Operation Order Number 16-44 and appropriate annexes was completed.

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Annex George to BLT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

On 10 January, 1945, Operation Plan Number 1-45 (Iwo Jima Preferred Plan), and such annexes as Boat Assignment Table, Intelligence, Naval Gunfire Support, Air Support, Operation Overlay, Artillery Plan, Antiaircraft, Signal Communication, Password and Countersign were issued, followed on 21 January, by Operation Plan Number 2-45 (Iwo Jima Alternate Plan), with appropriate annexes.

The Task Organization of BLT 2/23 for Iwo Jima operation consisted of the following:

TASK ORGANIZATION:

- (a) "E" Company, 23d Mar(left Asslt)
- (b) "F" Company, 23d Mar(right Asslt)
- (c) "G" Company, 23d Mar(reserve)
- (d) 2d 37mm AT Plat, R/W Company, 23d Mar.
- (e) 81mm Mortar Plat, Bn Hq Company
- (f) Hq Company, 2dBn, 23d Mar.
- (g) 1st and 3d Plats(plus det Co Hq), Co C, 4th Tk Bn
- (h) 2d Plat, Co C, 4th Eng Bn
- (i) Co "B" (reinf), 10th Amph Trac Bn
- (j) Det 1st JASCO
- (k) Ln and FO Det, 2dBn, 14thMar.
- (l) Det (Int) H&S Co, 23d Mar
- (m) DetColl Sec, Co C, 4th Med Bn
- (n) Co "B", 133dMC Bn (SP)
- (o) Det Co "A", 4th Pion Bn (SP)
- (p) Co "B", 24th Rep Draft (SP)
- (q) Det 8th Field Depot (SP)
- (r) Attached after landing:
3d Plat, (Plus det 2d Plat, less dets), Co B, 2d Armd Amph Bn

The final stage of the planning phase for Iwo Jima was handicapped by a series of contradictory instructions, orders and annexes issued by either the landing force or naval component of the task force involving conflicts on many of the important details of the operation. The net result required a great deal of duplication of effort through all echelons. The pages of printed changes addenda, appendices and modifications thereto closely approximated the total of all written material contained in the basic orders.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

"Order, counter order, disorder," still holds true. Closer coordination and surveillance of orders and instructions should be exercised by corresponding higher naval and landing force echelons with particular regard to the intimate administrative and control details which importantly affect so small a unit as a Battalion Landing Team.

During the period 13-17 January, rehearsal exercises were conducted in the Maalaea Bay area off Maui, T.H. The exercises consisted of debarkation drills, approach schedules, individual BLT landings up to full scale division landing operations. The exercises were well planned and maximum benefits were experienced by the Marine and Navy personnel participating. Many difficulties of landing craft control, LVT wave formation and wave guide procedure were eliminated. The scheduled ship-to-shore movement of the exercise was in accordance with the preferred plan for the landing on Iwo Jima utilizing the same shipping and landing craft that would be available on Dog Day. As a result, the rehearsal was highly satisfactory and promoted high spirit and excellent coordination between Marine and Navy units involved.

Upon completion of the amphibious rehearsal at Maalaea Bay (17 January) ships were underway and anchored at Pearl Harbor on 18 January.

SECTION II - MOVEMENT TO OBJECTIVE:

The period from 18-21 January, while at Pearl Harbor, was devoted to recreation and rehabilitation aboard ship and ashore, staff conferences and continued work on the final preparation of plans and orders for Iwo Jima. On 22 January, LSTs 761, 587 and 812 with the assault troops of BLT 2/23 embarked thereon departed Pearl Harbor and arrived Eniwetok 3 February. On 27 January, APAs departed Pearl Harbor and reached Eniwetok 5 February. While enroute from Pearl Harbor to Eniwetok, personnel aboard the APA and LSTs conducted intensive shipboard training and completed the briefing of all hands on the plans for the operation and the details of the forward area rehearsal. On 5 February, LSTs got underway, followed on 8 February by APAs. All shipping was assembled at Saipan on 11 February, at which time the necessary transfer of troops from APA to LSTs was accomplished. This consisted of elements of rifle platoons and company headquarters, battalion headquarters company, engineer,

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Annex George to RCI 23 Operations Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

intelligence, shore party and tank reconnaissance detachments.

The scheduled exercise of the forward area rehearsal for 12 February, was cancelled because of unfavorable weather. Final conferences and briefing on the details of the rehearsal were held on this date. On 13 February, the ship-to-shore exercise was carried out as scheduled off the west coast of Tinian Island. The main purpose of this exercise was to improve the technique of landing craft control and also to coordinate the ship-to-shore communications between fire support ships and the assault SFCPs of the BLTs. No actual landing of troops was made. Waves were dispatched from the LD in accordance with the preferred plan for Iwo Jima. When the landing craft approached within 300 yards of the beach, they executed a flanking turn and proceeded back to ships from which they were launched. Troop debarkation, launching of LVTs, wave formation, landing craft control and the execution of scheduled waves crossing the LD were accomplished efficiently according to plan. The SFCP of the BLT was sent ashore to participate in the NGF ship-to-shore communication drills. By 1500, all troops were reembarked on respective ships, less the BLT SFCP which remained ashore overnight and reembarked the following morning.

As a final review, the forward area rehearsal served its purpose well. The rough edges of LVT wave formation, wave guide and landing craft control were polished off. All details of the ship-to-shore phase of the pending operation were well coordinated in preparation for efficient execution on Dog Day. It was felt upon completion of the forward area exercise that both Marine and Navy units were well prepared to execute the ship-to-shore phase of the Iwo operation.

Throughout the entire period, from date of embarkation to Dog Day, the cooperation of the officers and men of APA 207(USS Mifflin) with BLT 2/23 was excellent. A working harmony and a sound appreciation of the problems of both branches of the service was established early, which in the end contributed materially to the execution of BLT 2/23 ship-to-shore movement on Iwo Jima.

SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE MOVEMENT:

The basic plan for the amphibious assault on Iwo Jima called

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operations Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

for the landing of troops in LVT(2)s and LVT(4)s pre-loaded on LSTs. The amphibian tractor unit assigned to BLT 2/23 for the operation was Co B (rein), 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion.

The total number of LVTs assigned for use of this BLT and the prescribed tractor loading per LST consisted of the following:

<u>LST</u>	<u>LVT(A-4)s</u>	<u>LVT(2)s</u>	<u>LVT(4)s</u>
930	9		
761		12	3
812		15	2
587		2	13
TOTAL	9	29	18

The 9 LVT(A-4)s of the 3d Plat (plus 2d Plat, less Dets), Co "B", 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion remained under RCT 23 control for the landing phase and passed to BLT 2/23 control on the beach immediately subsequent to the actual landing.

In addition to the above, other landing craft allocated for use of the BLT were as follows:

<u>LSMs</u>	<u>LCV(P)s</u>	<u>LCMs</u>
3*	14 2(floating dumps)	2

*LSMs 216 and 126 contained the elements of the 1st and 3d Plats (plus det CoHq) Co "C", 4th Tank Battalion. LSM 202 contained Shore Party detachment and heavy Shore Party equipment. LCV(P)s in addition to being used as floating dumps were employed for landing the BLT Support Group, consisting of Detachment, Battalion Headquarters Company, the attached 37 mm AT Platoon, Regimental Weapons Company and elements of the BLT Shore Party and Beach Party. The LCMs were used to land additional elements of the Shore Party and also the Shore Party bulldozer. One LVT(2) and two LVT(4)s were used as free boats for the BLT command echelon. The Boat assignment of the command echelon was as follows:

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BLT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

LVT(4)

Free Boat #1	Free Boat #2	Free Boat #3
BLT CO and runner	2 NGF LnO and SFCP	7 Arty LnO and
Bn 3 and clerk	2 AL enlisted and jeep	3 enlisted
Bn CommO and CP enlisted	8 Bn 2 and 1 enlisted	2 Int Sec. HqCo
ALO and enlisted	4	12 Comm Sec
Corpsman	<u>1</u>	Int Sec H&S
	17	23d
		<u>19</u>

The rear command echelon consisted of Battalion Executive Officer, Ass't Bn-3, Communication Chief and two enlisted communication personnel plus the Battalion Intelligence Section Chief. Initially this echelon was boated in free boat #1 directly from the LST. Upon arrival of BLT CO and his command party in an LCV(P) from the APA, the two echelons transferred to effect an exchange of landing craft.

PLAN OF LANDING:

The approach plan and order of crossing the LD for BLT 2/23 schedule and call waves were set up according to the following:

BLT 2/23 BEACH YELLOW TWO

WAVE	LEAVE LSM AND TRANSPORT AREA	LEAVE LST AREA	ARRIVE LD	LEAVE LD	LAND
1			H-36	H-30	HCW -Hour
2		H-50	H-36	H-28	H plus 2
3		H-45	H-31	H-23	H plus 7
4			<u>BLUE BEACH ONLY</u>		
5		H-35	H-21	H-13	H plus 17
6		H-30	H-16	H-8	H plus 22
7	H-30		H-10	H-15	H plus 35
					or on call
8	H-30		H+20		On BLT Order
Free Boats(LVTs)		H-52			On BLT Order
LSM#202(SP)					On BLT Order

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 Annex George to RCT 23 Operations Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The Landing Diagram of BLT 2/23 was as indicated below:

WAVE	LANDING CRAFT AND TROOP UNIT	TIME OF LANDING
1	9 LVT(A-4) Det Co B, 2d Armd Amph Bn	HOW-hour
2	14 LVT(2) Assault Plats Co E Assault Plats Co F	HOW Plus 2 min.
3	7 LVT(2) 4 LVT(4) Co Hq and Sp Plat Co E Co Hq and Sp Plat Co F Combat Eng Rcn Det Combat Eng Rcn Det Det Bn Int Sec Det Bn Int Sec	HOW plus 7 min.
4	BLUE BEACH ONLY	
5	11 LVT(4) 1 LVT(2) Co G, (BLT Res) Combat Eng Plat, Tk Rcn Det, Beach and SP Rcn Det, FO Det 2d Bn 14th Mar	HOW plus 12 min.
6	5 LVT(4) 1 LVT(2) 6 Det Bn Hq Co and 81mm Mortar Plat	HOW plus 22 min.
6A	BLUE BEACH ONLY	
7	LSM 216 LSM 126 1st and 3d Plats (plus Det Co Hq) Co C 4th Tk Bn	HOW plus 35 min. or on call
8	12 LCV(P) Det Bn Hq Co, Elms SP and 37mm AT Plat	On Call
9	2 LCMs Elms SP and SP bulldozer	On Call
10	LSM 202 Elms SP and heavy SP equipment	On Call
11	2 LVT(4) and 1 LVT(2) BLT Command Echelon	Free Boats

The number of LVTs allocated the BLT for the landing was sufficient for the operation. The average troop load per LVT(2) was 18, and per LVT(4) 25, with additional space used for water and extra ammunition. In addition to the employment of LVTs for landing assault troops, they were used to evacuate wounded from the beach and, for hauling supplies and ammunition to the beach and inland dump areas.

LVT casualties due to mechanical failures were negligible in the assault phase of the operation. Several LVTs were knocked out or

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

rendered inoperative by enemy artillery and mortar fire in the approach to the beach and on the beach proper while attempting to move inland to cover positions. The exact number of LVT casualties and the extent of damage to inoperative vehicles due to enemy fire is not known. The general performance of the LVT(2)s and LVT(4)s attached to BLT 2/23 for the operation was excellent.

BLT SCHEME OF MANEUVER:

The operation plan of BLT 2/23 prescribed a landing of Beach Yellow Two, East Coast of Iwo Jima, with two companies abreast, "E" on the left, "F" on the right, "G" in reserve. The first wave of the BLT, composed of 9 LVT(A)4s when unmasked by LCIGs and when within effective range of the beach was to open fire with all available weapons to increase the period of neutralization of the beach area after the lifting of the scheduled Naval Gun Fire. Initially the LVT(A)4s were to be maintained under RCT 23 control for the ship-to-shore phase of the operation. Upon landing, the LVT(A)4s were to pass to BLT control and open fire on enemy beach installations and targets of opportunity, clear the beach proper and proceed inland to the vicinity of the second terrace and from positions in defilade were to cover by fire the debarkation and inland movement of the assault companies, then, provide close fire support as the attack progressed inland.

The LVT(2)s and LVT(4)s carrying the assault troops were to debark personnel and equipment on or near the beach utilizing the first available cover. Upon completion of debarkation the tractors were to proceed to the left flank of the Beach Yellow Two and return along the boundary between the boat lanes of Beaches Yellow One and Yellow Two, to vessels from which they were launched.

The assault companies, E and F, F on the right, landing at How Hour plus two minutes were to debark from LVTs at the first available cover and continue the attack rapidly inland to seize O-a and Airfield No. I within respective zones. Then on LT order, to continue the attack and seize O-b, prepared for further operations

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

to seize Airfield No. 2 and O-1 in assigned zones.

Co G, in BLT Reserve, was to land at How-Hour plus 17 minutes, debark at the first available cover, advance inland to vicinity of the third terrace and reorganize rapidly in preparation to conduct moppping up operations or to relieve or reinforce the assault units.

The attached engineer platoon was to land at How-Hour plus 17 minutes prepared for the detection and removal of enemy mines or obstacles in the beach area and to improve the routes of egress from the beach for the movement of wheeled and tracked vehicles inland.

The 81 mm Mortar Platoon was designated to land at How-Hour plus 22 minutes proceed to selected positions and support the attack.

The BLT tank attachments in LSMs were to land at How plus 35 minutes or on call of the BLT commander and upon landing to support the attack by attaching one platoon (reinforce) to each of the assault companies.

The other components of the BLT such as the 37mm AT Platoon, Jasco detachments, Artillery Liaison party and Shore Party elements were to be landed on order of the BLT commander and upon landing execute normal missions in support of the attack.

DESCRIPTION OF LANDING:

How-Hour, 0900
Dog-Day, 19 February
Transport Area to LD - 11,000 yards
LST Area to LD - 1500 yards
LD to Beach, - 4000 yards
LVT speed 4 knots
LCV(P), LCM speed 8 knots.

Sea and weather conditions were ideal for the landing. The surf was not great enough to interfere with maneuverability of the landing craft. Preliminary reports from the UDT units indicated that all beaches were favorable for the landing of LVTs and LCV(P)s and that the first terrace inland from the beach could be negotiated by troops and possibly, by LVTs and other tracked or wheeled vehicles at certain locations. The approaches to the beach were free of mines and underwater obstacles.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

About 0710, during the preliminary bombardment of the beaches, the LSTs moved into position in the LST area and were on station by 0730. The first LVT of the BLT was launched from LST 587 at about 0745. By 0805, all LVTs assigned BLT 2/23 were afloat and operating. The formation of waves and movement to the LD under control and guidance of wave officers in LCV(P)s was in progress by 0815. The LVT(A-4)s of the first wave were formed in rear LD at 0825. Up to this time the only indication of enemy fire was six rounds of 20mm observed falling near "F" Company LVTs about 600 yards in rear of the LD.

The general control of all LVTs during the formation of waves and the run from the LST area to rear of the LD was good. Just prior to dispatching the initial waves from PC 578, some confusion resulted when LVTs drifted south out of position. Furthermore, the difficulty of maintaining the PC and SCs on proper station required the lateral shifting of entire waves several times before being dispatched from the LD. This was rectified somewhat, but due to the constant drift to the south the problem continued.

Waves were formed and dispatched from the LD and landed on Beach Yellow Two according to the following schedule:

WAVE	TIME FORMED	TIME DISPATCHED	APPROXIMATE TIME LANDED
1	0825	0830	0902
2	0825	0832	0905
3	0830	0837	0910
4	BLUE BEACH ONLY		
5	0840	0847	0920
6	0845	0852	0922
7		0930	0940
8		1400	1430

Waves 1 to 6 had no difficulty in meeting the time schedule and were dispatched from the LD and landed according to the original plan for the ship-to-shore movement.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

From the time that the first wave was dispatched up to the landing of the first three waves there had been only few indications of enemy fire. Sporadic bursts of dual purpose 20mm and 40mm were observed hitting near the landing craft in the approach to the beach. Occasional rounds of mortar and artillery fell on the beach area and were possibly registration rounds. At about 0925, when the two assault companies had completed landing and were 50 to 75 yards inland the full effect of Jap massed artillery, mortar and gun fire of all descriptions was delivered along the entire beach front in the BLT zone. The volume of the fire and its accuracy caused heavy casualties in personnel on the beach. Several LVTs with troops aboard were put out of action close to the beach by one or more direct hits.

The proposed plan for the LVT(A-4)s of the first wave to move inland did not mature due to the impossibility of the terrain. The beach soon became congested at the waters edge where troops had debarked under the consistent pounding of heavy artillery and mortars. The subsequent waves were dispatched as scheduled and landed on a beach littered with the bodies of dead and wounded Marines plus the wreckage of abandoned landing craft and equipment. The need of tanks in the BLT zone at this time was critical. Several well concealed pillboxes to the front had the troops pinned down by heavy and accurate machine gun fire. In addition, direct fire was being received from an AT gun. It being impossible for the infantry to maneuver and work on these positions without being exposed, heavy casualties were suffered in constant attempts to reduce these positions.

LSMs 216 and 126, with the first and third Platoon Co "C", 4th Tank Battalion embarked thereon constituted the landing element of the seventh wave. This wave was scheduled to land at How plus 35 minutes or on call of the BLT commander.

At approximately 0927, BLT 2/23 commander requested from the RCT that the tank attachments of the BLT be landed immediately. The tank LSMs were subjected to heavy and concentrated artillery and mortar fire in their approach to the beach. It was evident that enemy observation had selected the LSMs as lucrative targets for artillery and mortars. Both LSMs assigned to the BLT moved through the intense barrage and reached the beach at about 0940, LSM 126, landed near the left boundary and LSM 216 near the right boundary of Yellow Two. The tanks from the 126 landed and proceeded inland in column. After traveling about 175 yards inland two tanks of the

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Annex George to RPT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

3rd platoon hit mines which blew the tracks and disabled the vehicles for further operations that day. The first tank of the Headquarters Platoon from LSM 216, immediately bogged down after clearing the ramp of the vessel. Attempts to free the tank for operations failed and it was abandoned. During the time that work was being conducted on the bogged down tank, LSM 216 was under constant fire from enemy guns and mortars of all types. Several direct hits were scored. The 216 withdrew from the beach to seaward about 200 yards; then, returned to the beach nearer to the center of Yellow Two. Officers and enlisted men from the tank crews then went ashore at this point to reconnoiter a possible place to put the tanks ashore. During the time of the reconnaissance, about 20 or more Marine casualties were put aboard the LSM from a near by evacuation point. Upon return of the tank personnel it was decided that it would be impossible to land tanks with safety on Yellow Two. The LSM withdrew from the beach and proceeded back to the LD via PC 578, and then to the hospital LST 930 which was close by. While in the process of unloading badly wounded men, orders were issued from PC 578 to proceed to Beach Yellow One without delay. The order was executed and the tanks of the 1st Platoon on LSM 216 were landed at about 1215, on Yellow One, in the same area where the tanks of BLT 1/23 had landed previously. Radio communication was established between the BLT commander and the tank company commander at this time.

As a result of the instructions issued by the BLT commander, repeated attempts were made to maneuver tanks laterally across the beach at different locations. However, the numerous shell craters made it impossible for the tanks to get across to the BLT 2/23 zone of action without bogging down in shell craters. As a result BLT 2/23 operated throughout Dog-Day less the valuable support of tanks. One of the bogged down tanks in BLT 1/23 zone rendered effective fire support and reduced several machine gun emplacements and local centers of enemy resistance on the extreme left of the BLT position.

Elements of the BLT Support Group, namely Battalion Headquarters Company, Shore Party units, 37mm At Platoon and Engineers landed as scheduled at approximately 1430; all the elements of the BLT were ashore.

As a consequence of the landing against heavy resistance and

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

in the face of intensive mortar and artillery fire the casualties for the BLT on Dog-Day were unusually heavy (5 officers and 268 enlisted). Units were badly disorganized due to the loss of officers and key non-commissioned officers in responsible positions in the units and the intense shelling which fell throughout the BLT positions and constantly disorganized attempts to eliminate the resistance which impeded the advance.

SECTION IV NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

DOG DAY, 19 FEBRUARY, 1945.

1. See SECTION III for tactical plan of landing.
2. At 0902, the LVTA's were ashore on Beach Yellow Two. At 0905, the Executive Officer of Company "F" was ashore with the second wave on Beach Yellow Two and reported only light small arms fire from emplacements on the immediate beach. Such emplacements were quickly reduced by troops with grenades, demolitions and flamethrowers. The Company Commander of Company "F" reported ashore with the third wave at 0910. This completed the landing of the two assault companies of BLT 2/23.

Company "E" reported light small arms as the resistance in the left of the BLT zone at this time. Company "F" reported the same type of resistance on the right of the BLT zone at 0914. At 0915, Company "E" estimated position to be one hundred yards inland on Yellow Two and reported small arms had increased from light to heavy. Company "F", at 0920, confirmed the same state of resistance in the right of BLT zone, with enemy artillery and mortar fire beginning to fall.

Company "G" (Reserve Company) was ashore at 0920.

Company Commanders reported the situation ashore good, troops had advanced inland two hundred yards against heavy small arms, artillery and mortar fire.

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At 0940, C.O. BLT 2/23 was ashore with the command group. The CP was established at TA 165 Q southeast. The situation at this time found the troops at the base of Airfield No. I held up by emplacements in the area (TA 165 L,H,Q). The 81 mm mortars, in the vicinity of the third terrace, engaged these targets without satisfactory results. Continued attempts by troops to reduce these pill-boxes were unsuccessful.

The tanks were dispatched on call of C.O. BLT 2/23. Some were landed on Yellow Two, but were unable to negotiate the ground because of mines, heavy artillery, mortar fire and fire from high velocity weapons. At 1400, an attempt was made to bring tanks from adjacent zones of action, but this proved impossible for above mentioned reasons.

Meanwhile the BLT Support Group received heavy fire of the same nature about two hundred yards inland from the beach, which resulted in the loss of three 37 mm guns, the fourth gun having been immobilized. Two of the four 81 mm mortars suffered direct hits from enemy counterbattery fire.

About 1500, an attempt was made to move "E" and "F" Companies laterally northward around the resistance, containing the same with one platoon from Company "G". The Company Commander of "E" Company was KIA in this movement and the Company Executive Officer assumed control of "E" Company. Artillery and mortar concentrations were extremely heavy on the lines and caused many casualties. Confusion and disorganization during attempts to complete the movement were normal.

"F" Company succeeded in reaching the airstrip in the right of the BLT zone of action at 1730, (TA 165 G,H).

At 1800, BLT 2/24 passed through BLT 2/23 and held on that line for the night. Because of the late hour, scattered elements of BLT 2/23 remained on the line with BLT 2/24 and rejoined the parent unit the following morning.

BLT 2/23 reformed lines (TA 165 L,M,H) and reorganized. The CP was located in TA 165 L.

The formation was "G", "E", "F" Companies, with "G" Company on the left.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

Due to the inability of vehicles and supporting arms to traverse the beach and the confusing and disorganizing effect of enemy artillery and mortar fire the Dog Day advance was considerably limited.

Heavy shelling continued throughout the entire day and evening.

DOG PLUS ONE DAY, 20 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Enemy artillery and mortar fire continued to fall in BLT 2/23 zone throughout the night and caused some casualties.

The basic substance of the order received from RCT 23 was as follows: King Hour 0830, boundaries same as initially assigned, objective O-1, formation BLT 3/23 on the left, BLT 2/24 on right. BLT's 1/23 and 2/23 in reserve. BLT 2/23 ordered to reorganize and remain in present position prepared to support the attack as ordered.

The activity of BLT 2/23 for this date was as follows: At 1200, Company "E" mopped up abutment and high ground in the vicinity of TA 165 P,V,Q - 164 Y on RCT 23 order. The mission was completed with no enemy being encountered and "E" Company returned to the assembly area by 1600. The results of this activity were reported to RCT 23. BLT 2/23 was reorganized, rearmed and reequipped.

At 1231, RCT 23 front lines were reported to be along the O-B line. BLT 2/23 was alerted to be prepared to release elements to fill gaps. The situation as it developed did not require the release of elements for this purpose.

A movement was executed at 1630 on RCT order, from BLT present position to a position along the seaward edge of the Airfield No. I. The line thus formed by BLT 2/23 was the Regimental Reserve line.

The formation from left to right, "F", "E", "G" Companies. Company "F" was in contact with BLT 1/23. Company "E" was released to BLT 2/24 to carry supplies, but reverted to parent control prior to darkness and assumed the designated position on line.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

DOG PLUS TWO DAY - 21 FEBRUARY, 1945.

BLT 2/23 area was shelled periodically throughout the night. Both mortar and artillery fire fell in this position.

The basic substance of RCT 23 order for this date was as follow King Hour 0810. Boundaries, objective, formations same. Preparation by 2/14. King - 20 minutes to King plus 20 minutes. BLT's 1/23 and 2/23 remain present positions prepared to support the attack as ordered.

BLT 2/23 activity for the day was as follows: At 1700, "G" Company was released to BLT and Company "E" moved to the position vacated by "G" Company along the seaward edge of the northeastern runway of Airfield No. I.

The formation left to right was: "F" and "E" Companies. "F" Company was in contact with BLT 1/23 on the left. "G" Company was attached to BLT 2/24. There was no change in the CP location.

Artillery and mortar fire continued to fall in BLT zone. Almost continuous shell reports were transmitted to 2nd Bn, 14th Marines.

At 2330, a counterattack was reported on the left of the RCT zone. "E" and "F" Companies were in excellent positions to eliminate any penetration. The counter-attack was reported as having been broken up by artillery fires shortly thereafter.

DOG PLUS THREE DAY, 22 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The night continued as previous ones with periodic enemy artillery and mortar fires. There were also frequent air bursts by large calibre AA guns. At 0300, a lone enemy plane ineffectively bombed the airstrip and beach in BLT 2/23 zone.

The basic substance of RCT 23 order received this date was as follows: RCT 21 relieves RCT 23. BLT 2/23 passes with RCT 23 to VACLIF Reserve. Company "G" reverts to BLT 2/23 control. BLT 2/23 maintain present position, reorganize and be prepared to support attack on Corps front.

The actions of BLT 2/23 for this date were as follows:

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

Company "G" reverted to parent control from BLT 2/24 and reassumed position on the right of Company "E" on the seaward edge of Airfield No. I. The reorganization of the BLT was progressing favorably. Shelling of the BLT area continued throughout the day. Shell reports were made to the 2nd Bn, 14th Marines.

The formation from left to right was: "F", "E", and "G" Companies. Contact on the left was with BLT 1/23.

DOG PLUS FOUR DAY, 23 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Enemy artillery and mortar fire was received sporadically throughout the night. Shell reports were made to the 2nd Bn, 14th Marines.

BLT 2/23 continued as a component of VACLF Reserve alerted to be prepared to support attack on the Corps front.

The anticipated zones of action on the Corps front were reconnoitered. Shelling was periodic throughout the day and resulted in some casualties. The BLT reorganized, rearmed and reequipped in so far as was practicable.

The formation from left to right was: "F", "E", "G" Companies. Contact was maintained on the left with BLT 1/23. The assembly area and CP remained the same.

The BLT was alerted at 1930 for condition red. Several casualties were sustained from falling flak in the BLT assembly area.

DOG PLUS FIVE DAY, 24 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The night was the same as preceding nights with enemy artillery and mortars falling on the BLT position.

BLT 2/23 remained in the present assembly area as a component of VACLF Reserve, prepared to move to continue the attack on

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

the VAC front. The CP remained in the same position.

Reorganization progressed favorably.

The BLT was ordered to execute mopping up-missions on Airfield No. I and in the revetments in the vicinity thereof.

King Hour was at 0915. At 0930, "E", "F" and "G" Companies carried out this mission by partols. At 1200, the assigned area was covered with no enemy encountered. Duds were found and marked and the locations were reported to the Bomb Disposal Officer in the vicinity. All elements were closed to assembly areas by 1300. The results of the mopping up mission were reported to RCT 23.

At 2200 a condition red alert was passed to all hands in the BLT. Enemy planes ineffectively bombed the island. Condition white was sounded shortly thereafter.

The assembly area, CP and formation remained the same as the previous night.

DOG PLUS SIX DAY. 25 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The same type of enemy fire was experienced as on preceding nights.

The basic substance of RCT 23 order for the day was as follows: RCT 23 reverts from VACLF Reserve to 4th Division control at 0630. King Hour is 0930. Objective is O-1. Initial formation column of BLT's 3/23, 1/23. Blt 2/23 in RCT Reserve. When line O-1a is reached BLT 1/23 will pass to left of BLT 3/23 and continue the attack with two BLTs abreast. BLT 2/23 remain in RCT Reserve prepared to move to new assembly area after King Hour, on RCT order. BLT 2/23 will mop up RCT 23 rear area.

The actions of BLT 2/23 on this date were as follows: BLT 2/23 remained throughout the day in RCT Reserve and conducted mopping-up activity in RCT 23 rear area encountering no enemy. A report on the results of mopping-up activity was submitted to RCT 23. Replacements from ships platoons were received this date (2 officers and 181 enlisted) and were assigned to duty within the BLT. The BLT was

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

ordered to move to a new assembly area in the vicinity of TA 182 X, S, T, at 1600 and completed this movement by 1730.

The formation as of 1800 this date was "G", "F", and "E" Companies in a perimeter defense. The CP was established at TA 182S.

DOG PLUS SEVEN DAY, 26 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The night was more quiet than preceding periods. The shelling that was received in BLT 2/23 area was confined to a few mortar rounds.

The basic substance of the RCT 23 operations order for the day was as follows: Continue the attack with no change in boundaries, objective or formation. BLT 2/23 remain in assembly area as RCT Reserve. King Hour 0800.

The actions of this BLT for this date were as follows: At 0800, the Company Commander of "E" Company was transferred to BLT 3/23 on RCT order, as a company commander for that unit. The Executive Officer of Company "E" assumed command of that unit.

BLT 2/23 was alerted throughout the day to release elements to BLT's 1/23 and 3/23 on RCT order. Mopping up was conducted in TA's 182, 183, 165, 166. Negative reports were submitted and all units returned to the assembly area by 1200. At 1700, "F" Company and "G" Company were attached to BLTs 1/23 and 3/23 respectively and moved to TAs 183 F and 183 L respectively.

The formation at 1800 this date was "F" and "G" Companies attached to BLT's 1/23 and 3/23. Company "E" remained in the vicinity of the BLT CP at TA 182 S.

DOG PLUS EIGHT DAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 1945.

Sporadic shelling continued throughout the night in the BLT assembly area, but to a lesser degree than on previous nights.

The basic substance of the RCT 23 operations order for this

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

date called for, continuing the attack at King Hour (0800). Boundaries, formations same. Objective is O-2. BLT 2/23, less Company "G" remain in assembly area as RCT Reserve. Mop up RCT rear area between phase lines O-a and O-1.

BLT 2/23 actions on this date were as follows: Company "F" reverted to BLT 2/23 at King Hour, but maintained its present position in TA 182 F. Company "G" remained attached to BLT 3/23. Anti-sniper patrols were active throughout the day between phase lines O-a and O-1 with negative results. The results of these patrols were reported to RCT 23. Routes of approach to BLTs 1/23 and 3/23 were reconnoitered during the day.

At 1515, Company "E" was attached to BLT 1/23 on RCT order and assembled in the vicinity of TA 183 C,D. At 1530, "E" Company (2/24) was attached to BLT 2/23 and assembled in the vicinity of TA 182 R.W. BLT 2/23 was alerted to relieve BLT 3/23 the following day. A reconnaissance of routes was executed and plans for relief of lines and continuation of the attack in the zone were completed prior to darkness.

The formations at this time were: Company "E" attached to BLT 1/23 and Company "G" to BLT 3/23. "E" Company (2/24) attached BLT 2/23 was in TA 182, R,. "F" Company remained in the vicinity of TA 183 F. There was no change in the CP location.

DOG PLUS NINE DAY, 28 FEBRUARY, 1945.

The night was relatively quiet with a few rounds of enemy artillery and mortar fire landing near the BLT area.

The RCT 23 order received for this date called for continuing the attack at King Hour 0815. Boundaries and objective same. BLT 2/23 relieve BLT 3/23.

Formation BLTs 1/23 and 2/23 in assault, with 2/23 on the right BLT 3/23 in RCT Reserve.

The orders and actions of BLT 2/23 for this date were as follows: Relief of BLT 3/23 over previously reconnoitered routes.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

completed prior to daylight. BLT 2/23 attacked in a column of companies, "G", "F", and "E" (2/24) Companies, in that order. Company "F", on order, was to pass to the right of Company "G" and continue the attack with two companies abreast. "E" Company (2/24) attached, was to follow the attack as ordered. The CP remained in TA 182 S and an OP was established in TA 183-0.

Company "G" on a three hundred yard front, jumped off at King Hour. Initial movement was slow and difficult against intense automatic small arms. The terrain was a flat corridor interspersed with many camouflaged pillboxes and bunkers. By 1200, "G" Company had pushed three hundred and fifty yards against fierce resistance. At this time, one platoon of "F" Company was committed on "G" Company's right to gain the rising ground on the RCT right boundary. This maneuver was completed and was also to facilitate maintaining contact with BLT 1/25, which was attacking through BLT 2/23 zone in an easterly direction. BLT 1/25 did not make any progress and the right of Company "G" and the platoon of "F" Company found themselves on difficult ground, faced with enemy in emplacements concealed by heavy brush and at ranges of fifteen to twenty-five yards.

At this point and throughout the day, large volumes of accurate mortar and automatic small arms fire caused many casualties. Intense plunging machine gun fire from the left flank pinned down the leading elements and prevented further advance.

The attached tanks of Company "B", 4th Tank Bn, were limited in operation due to mines, obstacles and impassible terrain. Many efforts to employ their fire in support of leading elements failed.

At 1300, the 3rd and 4th Marine Divisions jumped off in a coordinated attack. The preparation fire was adjusted to within one hundred yards of the front line in the BLT zone. The preparation by 2/14 and 4/14 was scheduled for fifteen minutes prior to the attack, then to lift two hundred yards and fire for seven minutes, then lift another two hundred yards and fire for seven minutes. BLT 2/23 utilized this preparation and repeated same.

At 1330, the Company Commander of Company "F" was WE. The Company Executive Officer assumed command of "F" Company.

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Annex George to BCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The line at that time crossed the eastern slopes of Hill 382 and passed up the corridor in TA 200 Y east, while on the right the line was in TA 183 E Center.

In addition to frontal automatic and small arms fire, heavy mortar fire was received from adjacent zones of action. Rockets and artillery were employed in an attempt to eliminate the enemy mortars. Smoke was laid and a platoon of "F" Company was committed on the right in an attempt to break through and encircle the emplacements, all without sufficient results.

At 1430, "K" Company (3/23) was attached and assembled in TA 183 F as BLT Reserve.

At 1700, no further progress had been made. Elements in adjacent zones were unable to advance. BLT 1/23 was unable to tie in north of Hill 382. Under the circumstances the ground held by BLT 2/23's left became untenable. Withdrawal of the left flank was completed with the aid of smoke prior to darkness. Casualties were evacuated with the aid of smoke and at 1800, the left flank was tied in with BLT 1/23 on the southern slopes of Hill 382. The right flank maintained its position, but it was necessary to move the remaining platoon of "F" Company under cover of darkness, because of enemy fire on that area, to tie in with BLT 1/25 which had not advanced.

Intense and prolonged light to medium mortar and AT fire was received by the OP all day.

At 1600 this date, the Company Commander of "E" Company operating with BLT 1/23 as the left assault company was WE. The Company Executive Officer assumed command of Company "E".

The formation from left to right at 1900 this date was: "G" and "F" Companies. "E" Company (2/24) and "K" Company (3/23) were in reserve. Contact was established on the left with BLT 1/23 and on the right with BLT 1/25.

The LD was the previous night's line and the lines at 1900 this date were: TA 200 Y north center to Ta 183 E north center.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

DOG PLUS TEN DAY, 1 MARCH, 1945.

Enemy light and medium mortar fire fell on the lines throughout the night and frequent exchanges of machine gun and rifle fire were evident.

BLT 2/23 was relieved on the line by BLT 1/24 before daylight and the relief was completed prior to King Hour. (It is notable at this point that passage of lines had been impossible: A relief by squads and on some occasions by groups, had been necessary to avoid engagement with the enemy).

BLT 2/23 passed to VAC Reserve at 0830. "E" Company (2/24) and "K" Company (3/23) were released to parent control. Company "E" reverted from BLT 1/23 control to BLT 2/23 control.

BLT 2/23 closed to TAs 165 BC - 182 VW at 0900 and established communication on the required VAC nets by 0930.

C.O. BLT 2/23 reported personally to VAC in TA 147 R and discussed the terrain and the direction of attack with VAC Commanding General and Chief of Staff. Direct liaison was maintained with VAC.

At 1100, BLT 2/23 TQM was assigned duty as Company Commander of "E" Company. The current Company Commander was reassigned as Executive Officer.

BLT 2/23 remained throughout the day as VAC Reserve, alerted to move to the VAC front on two hours notice.

Mines were removed in the assembly area and all mines not removed were clearly marked. Rearming, reorganization and reequipping were instituted.

The formation from left to right at 1800 was : "E", "F" and "G" Companies in a perimeter. The CP was established in TA 182 V.

DOG PLUS ELEVEN DAY, 2 MARCH, 1945.

The night was quiet.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

BLT 2/23 remained throughout the day in VAC Reserve with no change in orders, assembly area, disposition of troops or CP.

DOG PLUS TWELVE DAY, 3 MARCH, 1945.

The night was quiet.

BLT 2/23 remained as VAC Reserve with no change in orders, disposition of troops, assembly area or CP.

The BLT reorganization was completed.

DOG PLUS THIRTEEN DAY, 4 MARCH, 1945.

There was no change from 3 March, 1945.

DOG PLUS FOURTEEN DAY, 5 MARCH, 1945.

The night was quiet.

BLT 2/23 remained in VAC Reserve with no change in orders, disposition of troops, assembly area or CP.

At 1500 the BLT reverted to RCT 23 control and was alerted to be prepared to execute a relief of BLT 3/24 and to continue the attack the following day in that zone. The anticipated zone of action was reconnoitered from both the air and the ground. The plans for the relief of lines and continuation of the attack were completed prior to darkness.

DOG PLUS FIFTEEN DAY, 6 MARCH, 1945.

The night was quiet.

The basic substance of RCT 23 order was: King Hour 0800. 4th Marine Division jumps off at King plus 60. Preparation by nine battalions of artillery massed in front of the zones of RCT 23 and 24. BLT 2/23 relieves BLT 3/24 prior to King Hour and continues the attack in that zone. Formation, BLT's 2/23 and 3/23 attacking in column of BLT's "L" Company (3/23) in RCT Reserve. Objective O-3.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The actions and orders of BLT 2/23 were as follows: BLT 2/23 with "G" and "F" Companies in the attack, "G" Company on the left and "E" Company in BLT Reserve, relieved BLT 3/24 prior to daylight over previously reconnoitered routes. BLT 2/23 CP moved at daylight to TA 201 K west center.

The BLT occupied a line from four hundred yards on the left to two hundred yards on the right behind lines previously reported and jumped off on time. (King plus 60 - 0900). Both companies advanced initially with "G" Company moving about three hundred yards and "F" Company, about one hundred yards. Company "E" followed as ordered at three hundred yards. The initial resistance was from enemy small arms and mortars. This resistance intensified in the area of "F" Company and pinned it down. At 1130, Company "E" was moved to pass through the gap in depth between "G" and "F" Companies, moving in a column of platoons in conjunction with the "G" Company advance. Company "F" was given the mission of containing the resistance. In the process of the execution "E" Company was hit by an extremely heavy mortar barrage. The "E" Company Commander was WE. Many other casualties resulted. The Company Executive Officer assumed command, re-organized quickly and pushed to accomplish the maneuver, but was met once again by the same resistance augmented by much rifle fire. "E" Company continued to push and by 1530 had two platoons abreast of "G" and "F" Companies.

The nature of the terrain minimized the use of tanks, but three tanks and one flamethrower tank were used in the left zone to engage pillboxes and caves located in "G" Company area. Meanwhile Company "G" was receiving heavy automatic small arms fire from the left adjacent zone and was unable to move.

The BLT forward observers called fires within one hundred yards of the front lines in an attempt to neutralize some of the positions in front of "E" and "F" Companies, but this fire, though accurate, had little effect.

Company "F" was disorganized due to casualties and prolonged mortar fire. At 1345, "K" Company (3/23) was attached and at 1600, jumped off and passed through Company "F" in an attempt to bring up the BLT right. Company "K" made but fifty yards beyond "F" Company

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George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

positions and was held up by the same intense small arms and mortar fire. Company "F" passed to BLT Reserve.

The formation at 1800 was: "G", "E" and "K" Companies, Company "G" was on the left. "F" Company was in BLT Reserve. Contact on the left was with the 3rd Marine Division and on the right, over difficult terrain, with RCT 24.

The actual LD for the attack was: TA 201 H west, L east, Q east. The lines at 1800 this date: TA 201 I center, N northeast, R northeast. The total advance for the day was four hundred and fifty yards on the left and one hundred and fifty yards on the right.

At 1900, a mortar barrage hit "E" Company CP. The Company Commander and twenty-two enlisted were WE. The Company Executive Officer was KIA. The BLT Intelligence Officer left the BLT CP to take over duties as "E" Company Commander. This made a total of six company commanders and the seventh change in company commanders for Company "E" during the operation.

Company "E" was badly disorganized, but its positions were reorganized in spite of darkness.

DOG PLUS SIXTEEN DAY, 7 March, 1945.

There was considerable night activity characterized by sporadic mortar and sniper fire on the lines. Frequent exchanges of hand and rifle grenades at close ranges occurred during the hours of darkness.

At 0520, a large calibre rocket scored a direct hit in the BLT CP. The C.O., Executive Officer, Operations Officer, Adjutant and two clerks were wounded. The Communication Chief was KIA. All the wounded were evacuated with the exception of the C.O., who instituted reorganization. The RCT Executive Officer was assigned command of BLT 2/23 shortly after daylight, and a staff was constituted by intra-regimental transfers.

The RCT order called for continuation of the attack at King Hour (0730). Boundaries, formation and objective same.

On request of the new CO BLT 2/23 King Hour was delayed thirty

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

minutes to allow for the completion of the reorganization of the command group.

The attack jumped off on time (0800) with "G", "E", and "K" Companies on line. Company "G" was on the left. "E" Company held its position because of the heavy pocket of resistance to the front. Company "F" passed to the right rear of "G" Company and passed in front of Company "E", eliminating the immediate resistance to "E" Company's front by this flank movement. The maneuver was completed leaving "G", "F", and "K" Companies on line and advancing slowly, with Company "E" passing to BLT Reserve in TA 201 M.

Company "G" met resistance primarily from the left adjacent zone, but "F" and "K" Companies were promptly held up by intense automatic small arms and mortar fire.

It is worthy of note at this time that elements in the line which met the stiffest resistance were those confronted by draws and corridors. The terrain throughout this area was characterized by a series of broken ridges and cliff lines perpendicular to the front lines. The ground was a mixture of broken volcanic rock and sand. Accurate rifle fire was constantly received from the flanks and the high ground was completely covered by mortar fire and some small arms. The troops were forced to cover the draws to eliminate the resistance. The enemy allowed the troops to enter these draws and then pinned them down by fire from mutually supporting caves and pillboxes. Upon being "mousetrapped" into such a situation, the troops were subjected to heavy mortar concentrations. Many emplacements faced seaward to the north and northeast and were difficult to locate because of the crevices and nature of the rock. These positions constantly harrassed the troops from the rear and necessitated continuous patrol and demolitions missions.

Maps of this area were inaccurate and much of the terrain was left completely uncharted.

About 1200, "I" Company (3/23) was attached to BLT 2/23 and moved to a reserve position in rear of Company "G".

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The formation at 1800 this date was "G", "F" and "K" Companies. Company "G" was on the left. "I" and "E" Companies were in BLT Reserve. Contact was good on the left with BLT 1/9, and was established on the right over difficult terrain with RCT 24.

The LD was the previous day's lines and the lines at 1800 were; TA 202 F center, TA 201-0 northeast, S northwest. The advance totaled one hundred yards on the right and four hundred yards on the left.

DOG PLUS SEVENTEEN DAY, 8 MARCH, 1945.

Night activity was characterized by mortar fire, exchanges of machine gun fire, extremely accurate sniper fire and close contact with the enemy by hand grenade exchange.

The basic substance of the RCT order for this date was: Continue attack, King Hour 0750. Boundaries, formation same. Objective, Northeast coast within zone. Main effort on the right. RCT 23 attacks at King - 90.

The actions and orders of BLT 2/23 for this date were as follow BLT 2/23 jumped off at King - 90 with "G", "F" and "E" Companies in the attack. "G" Company was on the left. Company "E" had relieved Company "K" prior to daylight with "K" Company passing to the rear of "E" Company as BLT Reserve.

Company "E" was temporarily held up due to a repeated preparation in RCT 24 zone but all units were well underway at 0630.

The "G" Company advance was restricted by its lateral movement to the left and by its mission of supporting the advance of Company "F" by fire.

"F" Company met fierce resistance from mortars and machine guns to the front. The movement of the attached "G" Company Tanks was restricted due to mines and AT weapons. The Company Commander of Company "F" adjusted the fire of the tanks on enemy machine gun emplacements at ranges of twenty to thirty yards. Demolition units from Company "F" reduced enemy emplacements inaccessible to tank fir

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

At 0900, the "F" Company Commander was WE and the Company Executive Officer assumed command, making the third "F" Company Commander for the operation.

The right of "E" Company initially moved two hundred and fifty yards with the aid of smoke, but was there upon pinned down, while the left was meeting the same resistance as "F" Company.

At 0900, the boundary between RCT's 23 and 24 was adjusted and Company "E" was withdrawn and completely disengaged as a result. Meanwhile "K" Company (5/23), attached to BLT 2/23, maintained its position in rear of Company "E" to facilitate the disengagement which was completed by 1200. Company "E" then withdrew to TA 201 M as BLT Reserve.

At the completion of the disengagement of "E" Company, "I" Company (3/23), attached to BLT 2/23, was committed in a column of platoons between "G" and "F" Companies. The attack was continued with Company "G" receiving small arms fire from the left adjacent zone and Company "I" receiving small arms fire from the front. Company "F" continued to use the supporting fire of the tanks on caves along the cliff line on the BLT right boundary destroying many automatic weapons.

At 1200, Company "K" reverted to parent control and "L" Company (3/23) was attached to BLT 2/23 passing to BLT Reserve in positions in the rear of "G" Company.

BLT 2/23 continued the advance without regard for flank contact as ordered by RCT 23.

At 1500, the 1st Platoon Co. "C", 4th Engineer Bn was attached to BLT 2/23 for mine removal and demolitions missions in "F" Company area.

At 1600, the 2nd Platoon, Regimental Weapons Company (37 mm) was attached, but was released after a reconnaissance was made and no mission could be assigned, because of the unavailability of the terrain.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The formation at 1800 was; "G", "I" and "F" Companies on the line, with "G" Company on the left, RCT 24 had been unable to advance and Company "E", less one platoon, reenforced by one and one half platoons of Company "L" was disposed to close the gap in depth between BLT 2/23 and BLT 3/24. The remaining platoon of "E" Company was placed in reserve behind "E" and "F" Companies. Company "L", less one and one half platoons, was placed in a reserve position behind "G" and "I" Companies. Contact on the left with BLT 3/21 was good, but on the right it was established with BLT 3/24 over extremely difficult terrain. The CP remained in the same location.

The LD was the previous nights' lines and the lines at 1800 on this date were; TA 202 F east center, L west center, P center, TA 201 T center, S center. The total advance for the day was one hundred yards on the flanks and two hundred and fifty yards in the center.

At approximately 2100, several rounds of enemy medium mortar fire hit within the BLT CP, followed almost immediately by three direct hits from large calibre rockets. Company "E" reported strong attempts by the enemy to infiltrate over the difficult terrain on the BLT right flank. Large groups of enemy were active in front of the entire BLT. The companies reported that they were capable of handling the situation, but "E" Company's position was considered precarious due to the difficult ground.

About 2230, "E" Company reported that about thirty enemy had over run a position on the BLT right flank and were in rear of the lines. The "E" Company Commander filled the gap in the line.

About that time about eight enemy were reported in the vicinity of the BLT CP.

DOG PLUS EIGHTEEN DAY, 9 MARCH, 1945,

The night was very active. Mortar barrages fell on "I", "F" and "E" Companies throughout the night. Enemy mortars and rockets were observed firing on the rear areas by the front line companies. Counter mortar and artillery fires were called and shell reports to the 2nd Bn, 14th Marines were continuous.

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Annex George RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

At 0100, the "E" Company ammunition shortage was critical and ammunition was dispatched by jeep and trailer, over an enemy infested road, with the aid of 60 mm illumination. The jeep drew several rounds of enemy small arms fire. What was previously believed to be a major attempt at infiltration, later proved to be a counterattack on "I", "F" and "E" Companies with the main effort hitting Company "E". This was confirmed by enemy documents captured the following morning. A number of enemy reached the BLT CP and some of these harrassed the Operations Section with hand grenades, at ranges of ten to fifteen yards throughout the night. The morning count totaled four hundred and ninety nine enemy dead in front of the lines and thirty enemy dead within the CP. Company "E" expended twenty cases of hand grenades, two hundred rounds of 60 mm HE, two hundred rounds of 60 mm illumination shells and an unknown quantity of machine gun, BAR and rifle ammunition. NGF expended one hundred and ninety three star shells during the emergency and throughout the night.

BLT 2/23 was given the mission of advancing in conformity with the units on the left and right and supporting by fire the advance of BLT 3/24.

Company "E" was given the specific mission of maintaining contact with BLT 3/24 and supporting the advance of that unit in every possible way, closing to BLT Reserve as BLT 3/24 came abreast of BLT 2/23.

Elements of Company "L" attached to Company "E" reverted to parent control and "E" Company mopped up the entire rear of the RCT zone. No enemy were encountered, mopping up was completed by 1000 and Company "L" returned to BLT Reserve position in rear of Company "G".

BLT 3/24 was abreast of BLT 2/23 by 1445, and at 1500, "L" Company passed through "F" Company. The attack continued with "G", "I" and "L" Companies on line. Contact on the left was with BLT 3/21 and on the right with BLT 3/24. Resistance consisted primarily of small arms, snipers and some mortar shelling. The decrease in resistance was believed due to the previous nights activity.

The advance of Company "G" was limited by the lack of movement by BLT 3/21 on the left, where a breach of contact would have exposed the BLT left flank to enemy held high ground.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

"I" Company reported two hundred more enemy dead as a result of the previous nights artillery and mortar fires.

Prior to 1700, "E" and "F" Companies joined "K" Company under BLT 3/23 control as VAC Reserve. "B" and "C" Companies were attached to BLT 2/23 from BLT 1/23 and were ordered to positions on the lines of the previous night as BLT Reserve.

The formation at 1800 was: "G", "I" and "L" Companies on line, with Company "G" on the left. "C" and "B" Companies occupied a BLT Reserve line. Contact on the left with BLT 3/21 and on the right with BLT 3/24 was good.

The LD was the previous nights lines and the lines at 1800 this date were; TA 202 F east center, L Center, P east, V northwest. The advance for the day was one hundred yards on the left and in the center, while the right advanced four hundred yards. The CP remained in the same location.

DOG PLUS NINETEEN DAY, 10 MARCH, 1945.

There was no night activity except for a few minor attempts at infiltration and there was an absence of enemy mortar and artillery fire for the first time.

The basic substance of the RCT order for this day was: Continue attack advancing in conformity with units on left and right. King Hour 0800. - Boundaries, formation same. Objective, coast line within zone.

The orders and actions of BLT 2/23 for this date were as follows: BLT 2/23 initially waited for an adjustment on the flanks in both adjacent zones of action. "G", "I" and "L" Companies remained on line with Company "G" on the left. "C" and "B" Companies were in BLT reserve, with "C" Company on the left.

At 1000, BLT 3/21 was still unable to advance to the high ground to the front, so the CO BLT 2/23 positioned one platoon of Company "C" on the RCT left boundary to contain same. As a result of that action "G" Company was able to advance and "I" and "L" Companies advanced on

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George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

Company "G". The resistance was only rifle fire, but Company "G" had to hold after an advance of two hundred yards, or expose its rear to fire from the same uncovered high ground in the 3rd Marine Division zone.

At 1500, BLT 1/9 passed through RCT 23 area to attack in the gap in depth between BLT 3/21 and BLT 2/23, created by the advance of Company "G". Elements of "C" Company occupied a portion of this ground, but were recalled to prevent interference with the attack of BLT 1/9. The attack of BLT 1/9 jumped off at 1600, but did not net any ground, however, it enabled "G" Company to tie in with "A" Company (1/9) and maintain solid contact, thereby reducing a possible enemy threat from the high ground.

The advance CP moved to TA 202 P at 0830, and operated from that point throughout the day.

Co "C", 4th Eng Bn, attached to BLT 2/23, cleared mine fields along the road in the BLT zone and bulldozed a road to the companies for supply. The engineer squads were active throughout the day in aiding the companies by demolition missions and reducing caves in the rear areas. By 1600, tanks were well along the road in the BLT zone and were able to support the attack of BLT 1/9 by fire.

"I" and "L" Companies sent patrols to the coast and the patrols returned with negative reports on enemy in the zone.

Initial lack of contact on the left prevented the entire BLT from going all the way to the coast.

Because of the proximity to the end of the island the companies requested that all artillery and mortar fire in the BLT zone be strictly call fire and originated by them.

The LD was the line of the previous night and the lines at 1800 this date were; TA 202 M northcenter, R north center, S southwest, X center, TA 185 D west center, H northeast. The total advance for the day was two hundred yards on the left, five hundred yards in the center and six hundred and fifty yards on the right. The CP remained in TA 201 K.

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Annex C of RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

DOG PLUS TWENTY DAY, 11 MARCH, 1945.

The night was quiet with a few minor attempts at infiltration. "G" and "I" Companies each killed eleven enemy and "L" Company killed twenty-one enemy.

The RCT order called for no change in boundaries, formation or objective, with King Hour set at 0830.

BLT 2/23 was given permission to await adjustment of elements in the adjacent zones prior to continuing the attack. Meanwhile the front line companies mopped up two hundred yards in rear of the lines. The reserve elements, "B" and "C" Companies mopped up the entire rear area with negative results.

The advance CP was operated again in TA 202 P.

At 1030, strong combat patrols reenforced by a squad of engineers were sent from each front line company to the coast. The remaining engineers continued active in mine clearance and demolition missions. At 1200, the patrols returned from the coast with negative information on enemy presence and activity in the BLT zone. The BLT zone was declared secure at this time.

At 1300, the entire line swept to the coast within the BLT zone. There was no enemy opposition and the troops returned to occupy the lines of the previous night, since that ground was determined to be the most favorable for control of the area. The ground forward of that position was characterized by broken ridges and deep fissures.

The CO of BLT 2/23 (Major Davidson) reassumed command and the BLT was relieved on the line by BLT 1/23 at 1600.

"L" and "I" Companies reverted to parent control. "B" and "C" Companies reverted to parent control. Company "E" reverted to BLT 2/23 control from BLT 3/23, but Company "F" remained attached to BLT 3/23. Co C, 4th Eng Bn, was detached from BLT 2/23 and attached to BLT 1/23.

BLT 2/23, less Company "F" assembled in the vicinity of TA 165 BC. All elements of BLT 2/23 had closed to the rear area by 1800, except "F" Company, which remained in ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ under BLT 3/23 control.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

The formation at 1800 this date was "E" and "G" Companies in a perimeter defense in TA 165 EC. The CP was located in TA 165 B.

DOG PLUS TWENTY ONE DAY, 12 MARCH, 1945.

The night was very quiet.

BLT 2/23, less Company "F", remained in the vicinity of TA 165 BC disposed in a perimeter. The CP remained in TA 165 B.

The BLT was reorganized. Company "F" remained attached to BLT 3/23 and policed and mopped up within a five hundred yard radius of its position.

DOG PLUS TWENTY TWO DAY, 13 MARCH, 1945.

The night was very quiet.

Company "F" reverted to BLT 2/23 control at King Hour. Police and salvage operations by "F" Company were completed prior to darkness as ordered by RCT 23.

At 1600, BLT 2/23 was alerted for movement to TA 200 W,X,Y on RCT order. Ammunition was made ready for the movement. Two War Dogs were attached to Company "F" for the night. The reorganization of the BLT was completed. There was no change in the disposition of troops or the CP. Company "F" remained in its previous position.

DOG PLUS TWENTY THREE DAY, 14 MARCH, 1945.

The night was very quiet.

BLT 2/23 was released from the alert of the previous day at 0830. Company "F" remained in its present position.

Company "E", providing the advance party, billeting detail and loading detail was alerted to move early on 15 March, 1945.

There was no change in the disposition of troops or the CP.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operations Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

DOG PLUS TWENTY FOUR DAY, 15 MARCH, 1945.

The night was very quiet.

The advance party left for embarkation point at 0715.

The advance party, billeting detail, loading detail and organizational gear were embarked on the U.S.S. Rockbridge (APA 228).

The troops were alerted to move early to the embarkation point on 16 March, 1945.

There was no change in the location of troops or CP.

DOG PLUS TWENTY FIVE DAY, 16 MARCH, 1945.

The night was very quiet.

At 0700, all elements of BLT 2/23 moved to the embarkation point. At 0800, embarkation of gear and personnel began and at 2300, the embarkation of gear and personnel aboard the U.S.S. Rockbridge was completed.

SECTION V - COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. COMMENTS

1. Replacements assigned to this unit, although absorbed while in a reserve status, created in combat a considerable problem in control. The inexperience of the replacements; their lack of aggressiveness; their unfamiliarity with the officers and men of the unit to which assigned; and their inability to perform assigned missions in combat proved to be a great burden not only to themselves, but also to the safety and fighting efficiency of their fellow Marines.

2. In battle it is the man doing the job that pays dividends. It was not considered necessary that officers be assigned in battle according to T/O designation. Junior officers with knowledge of the troops in most cases have been found very well qualified to lead and direct a company. By virtue of the same token, old and experienced non-commissioned officers make excellent platoon leaders.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

3. It is considered advisable to assign zones of action flexibly where actual ground reconnaissance is not feasible. Changes in zones dictated by the terrain and made by mutual agreement between units in contact on the ground would frequently facilitate operations

4. In this particular operation when directed to resume the attack in another unit's zone, relief of the line prior to daylight was favored over the normal procedure of passing through.

5. "Tying in" and filling gaps between adjacent units proved as usual to be a delicate and hazardous problem. Assignment to troops from the reserve elements of the responsibility for reconnaissance with a view to filling the gaps on short notice greatly facilitated this procedure. Units operating at reduced strength found it difficult and often impossible to fill in gaps when they could barely cover the frontage of the assigned zone of action.

6. Physical contact with adjacent units is not always necessary in daylight operations. Willingness to disengage flank contact to take immediate advantage of opportunities to advance proved almost invariably to be the only means of taking ground during this operation.

7. The bazooka and demolitions of all types proved to be the most satisfactory weapon for the reduction of caves and fortified positions. Whenever it was possible, the 75 mm tank gun proved invaluable in direct fire support missions against caves. However, the limitations imposed by the terrain often made it impossible for the use of tanks. Most cave and fortified positions were destroyed by simple plain assault tactics and the aggressiveness of Marine infantry.

8. The portable flame thrower and the tank mounted flame thrower were used considerably throughout the operation and proved highly satisfactory in the destruction of fortified positions and machine gun emplacements. The large tank mounted flame thrower was used both in mopping up operations of caves and also in the assault with infantry on the line.

9. Again in the Iwo Jima operation as in past operations the

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Two Jima) (continued)

combat Marines were called upon to bury the enemy dead. It is considered that this had an adverse effect on morale, especially when troops had labored under hazardous combat conditions over a considerable period of time. In addition, proper sanitary facilities for handling of the dead were not available.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the distribution of carbines in the rifle platoon be modified according to the following: That all squad leaders be armed with the M1 to increase the killing power of the platoon. The M1 has greater range, far better accuracy and also provides additional men with a bayonet for close-in combat. It has been consistently demonstrated that in combat men armed with the carbine "lose" the weapon voluntarily and pick up the first available M1 for use.

2. It is recommended that the T/O of the rifle company headquarters be increased by two corporals and two privates or privates first class to be used as company headquarters liaison runners between adjacent front line units. These runners would be of invaluable assistance to the company commander in keeping that officer informed of the movements and anticipated plans of the adjacent company. In this manner vital information of adjacent units could be made available to the company commander more quickly than through the normal channel of battalion liaison.

3. It is recommended that sufficient personnel be allotted each battalion to permit it to provide an advanced base rear echelon and still land with T/O strength in combat element.

4. The T/O strength should allow personnel for the operation of flame throwers and bazookas. The present system makes it necessary to break down fire teams to man these weapons.

5. It is recommended that a TQM officer be attached to each Landing Team for the Division TQM section for an operation, rather than assigning an officer from within the organization to function in this capacity. The present practice handicaps a Landing Team in that it removes a line officer from combat duties during the most critical stage of an operation.

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Annex George to RCI 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

6. It is recommended that replacement draft elements be assigned prior to an operation for training with the companies and platoons for as long a period as possible.

7. It is recommended that a minimum of seventy regular situation maps plus forty others of smaller R.F. be made available to a BLT to provide wider distribution to include more non-commissioned officers.

8. It is recommended that further Japanese Language schools be conducted for selected enlisted personnel from infantry companies. The object of the school should be limited to insure ability of the student to speak and understand simple conversation.

9. It is recommended that, for convenience, carbine cartridge (M6) be packed in the AT grenade cases as well as the crimped cartridges for the rifle M1. It is felt that more use of this excellent weapon would be exercised if this were effected.

10. The manufacture of illumination ammunition for the 81 mm mortar would lessen the illumination problem considerably and make an additional illumination agency available. Illumination from the 60 mm mortar was so often limited due to enemy infiltration and accurate knee mortar counter-fire.

11. A self fuze ready made explosive charge; more powerful than the present hand grenade and less bulky than a satchel charge (similar to the Japanese magnetic AT mine) would be valuable. Our troops reported excellent use of the Jap magnetic anti tank mine in cleaning out caves. A marine can easily carry six charges of this size and the self fuze characteristic is not only safer but facilitates effective use. Larger charges can be carried by support units to be brought forward if needed.

12. To facilitate communication it is recommended that sufficient SCR 300 radios be made available to the BLT to allow the issue of two per rifle company. These would be of great value during the initial landing phase and could be used later to allow both the company commander and the company executive officer to keep abreast of the situation.

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Annex George to RCT 23 Operation Report (Iwo Jima) (continued)

13. It is recommended that SCR 536 frequencies be assigned rifle companies of dissimilar alphabetical designation. Much confusion resulted on this operation from the assignment of the same frequency (for instance to all Companies "E" in the division).

14. It is recommended that 81 mm mortar ammunition equipped with a time fuze for air bursts be developed. By this means, the BLT would be enabled to deliver time fire when the proximity of enemy to friendly positions made use of artillery time fire impracticable.

15. In order to achieve as flexible a landing plan for medium tank elements as possible, it is recommended that control of tank attachments remain with the RCT until such time as a thorough reconnaissance of the beach areas and routes inland has been completed and the requirements of the assault BLTs evaluated. While it is impossible to determine whether the indicated change would have enabled tanks to negotiate this BLT's zone on the first day of the operation, it is none the less felt, that had the results of the initial reconnaissance by tank personnel been the determining factor as to when and where the tanks were to attempt a landing, considerably fewer losses in tanks and tank personnel would have been sustained. Further when it became apparent that the terrain of the zone was prohibitive to tanks, the full support of all the tanks could more readily have been shifted to the adjacent BLT.

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ANNEX ABLE TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

Administration

1. Planning.

The rear echelon of the battalion landing team was selected early and instructed as to their duties. One (1) officer and thirty-three (33) enlisted men, mainly administrative and supply personnel were assigned to the rear echelon. The rear echelon was larger for this operation than previous operations as it was anticipated that the base camp would be moved to a forward area.

The BLT was assigned one (1) APA, three (3) LSTs and three (3) LSMs. Personnel of the BLT were initially assigned ships as follows:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
USS Mifflin (APA 207)	67	1284
LST 761	9	196
LST 812	7	252
LST 587	7	282

Tank personnel attached to the battalion were assigned LSM's 126 and 216 and shore party personnel were assigned to LSM 202. All personnel who were to handle embarkation and casualties were instructed in the procedure outlined in Regimental SOP's.

Personnel of the BLT were assigned ships as follows from SAIPAN to Target:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
USS Mifflin (APA 207)	50	942
LST 761	12	341
LST 812	12	349
LST 587	15	383

Six (6) officers and two hundred ninety-eight (298) replacements from the 17th Replacement Draft were received 22 November, 1944. Company "B" of the 24th Replacement Draft was assigned to BLT 2/23 during the latter part of November. On December 5th six (6) more officers were joined. Due to the late date on which replacements were received, it is believed they did not have sufficient small unit training before going into combat.

2. Embarkation.

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ANNEX ABLE TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

The advance party and loading detail of approximately ten (10) officers and two hundred and ninety-eight (298) enlisted men were sent to APA 207 upon its arrival at the loading point. The advance party had about two days to prepare the ship to receive the main body of troops. The advance party was composed of billeting details, cooks and messmen. Embarkation was completed with no major difficulties.

3. Shipboard.

Conditions aboard the APA were good. However all LSTs were somewhat overcrowded. It is the opinion of officers who have been aboard LSTs that, with an LCT aboard, two hundred troops can be accommodated without overcrowding an LST. Without the LCT aboard only one hundred and fifty troops can be assigned. These figures include amphibian tractor personnel, but not ship's company.

Conditions, with the exception of overcrowding were good on LST 812. Fresh water showers were available at certain times and salt water showers were available at all times. Cooperation between Marines and Navy personnel was excellent. On LST 587, fresh water showers were available during certain hours every second or third day. A fresh water storage tank which had recently been converted from a fuel tank was not yet available as it had just been painted. However salt water showers were rigged at the suggestion of the Troop Commander. Accommodations for troop officers were overcrowded as this LST had flotilla headquarters aboard. The junior troop officers were quartered in crews quarters. Cooperation with the Navy was very good. On LST 761, troops were overcrowded because of the large deck load of Corps equipment and ammunition. Conditions on the rehearsal were so overcrowded that seventy-five men and one officer were transferred to APA 207. The troops that remained were still somewhat crowded. Cooperation by ship's company on this LST was not considered good. Unnecessary preference was shown to ship's personnel in the use of the ship's facilities.

Recreation at Pearl Harbor was provided for the men through recreation funds. However lack of adequate transportation from ship to shore plus constant shifting of LST anchorages handicapped the recreation program for the personnel embarked. s. Books, games

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ANNEX ABLE TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

and magazines provided by the Chaplains and Red Cross were of great benefit on the trip to target.

4. Operation.

The card system in recording casualties proved very effective. The original set of cards was lost or destroyed when the Battalion Sergeant Major and clerk in charge of the cards were killed immediately after landing. R-1 resupplied the battalion with cards, and from information from higher echelon and the companies, the new cards were quickly made and submitted to Regiment on 22 February. The first strength report was submitted on 20 February.

Total casualties for the battalion were as follows:

KIA		W&E		S&E		W&NE		MIA		TOTAL CASUALTIES	
O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E
6	143	16	481	4	51	7	103	0	3	33	781

Accuracy in reports was not always possible because of the loss of key personnel such as the adjutant, sergeant major and two first sergeants whose reports were either lost or destroyed. Also the large number of replacements who were previously unknown to officers and key NCO's made accurate reports difficult to obtain.

During the operation the battalion received 5 officers and 181 enlisted personnel. These replacements were assigned as follows:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
HqCo	1	3
Co "E"	2	55
Co "F"	1	47
Co "G"	1	76

In addition to these replacements the battalion was assigned 14 men from JASCO and 5 men from "C" Medical Company to be attached temporarily. These men were returned to their units prior to reembark-

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ANNEX ABLE TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO REPORT)
(Continued)

ation.

No civilians were encountered during the operation.

Morale throughout the operation was considered generally good to excellent. Factors contributing to this state of high morale were primarily the adequacy of post exchange supplies, fruit juice, mail, free stationery, and stamps. Frequent periods of rest were helpful to morale as troops could wash up and shave. The hot coffee and doughnuts brought up to the forward areas were excellent means of keeping up morale. Another important factor was the good work of the Chaplains. Religious services were held when ever possible. Mail service was satisfactory at all times. Mail was received and dispatched at all staging points. Mail was first received on IWO JIMA on 24 February and frequently thereafter for the remainder of the operation.

The unit journal was kept by the Bn-1 section. The information necessary for the journal was turned in to the Bn-1 section from all staff sections daily.

5. Recommendations.

It is recommended that sufficient additional personnel be allotted each battalion to permit it to provide an advanced base rear echelon and still land with T/o strength in combat elements.

It is recommended that the TQM officer be attached to each battalion from the Division TQM section for an operation rather than taking an officer from within the organization.

It is recommended that replacement drafts be so assigned for the training phase that their officers and men can be trained with the companies and platoons of a battalion for as long a period and as closely as possible, thereby eliminating much of the strangeness and novelty with which a replacement officer or enlisted man is harrassed upon joining a unit during combat.

It is recommended that more recreation games and books be

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ANNEX ABLE TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

provided for the return trip from the target to base camp. The supply is sufficient to the target, but inadequate for the return trip.

It is recommended that post exchange supplies be packed in individual packages in the same manner as assault rations. This would insure faster, more efficient distribution of these supplies in forward areas.

It is recommended that the Quartermaster carry extra towels in addition to extra clothing for distribution to those whose personal gear is lost. Towels are normally difficult to obtain aboard ship.

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ANNEX B AIR TO ANNET GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA).

INTELLIGENCE

1. The target square type map again proved very useful, but a darkening of target area numbers and of corner letters would be an improvement.

The vegetation was fairly accurately depicted. The contouring north of AIRFIELD NO. 1 varied in quality from fair accuracy to gross inaccuracy. A smaller contour interval might have led to more accurate representation of the sharpness of changes in elevation. As it was, the misconception of terrain formed affected operations adversely and many key terrain features did not find representation on the maps.

Man-made structures especially road systems were inaccurately shown. In this special case, there were many errors as to location, route traces, and in character or type depicted. For instance, the roads shown as improved did not approach what was reasonably expected and those shown as unimproved were scarcely more than trails. Much confusion resulted in attempting to locate junctions and cross-roads. This was especially true in the portion of the island north of AIRFIELD NO. 2.

A minimum of seventy regular situation maps plus forty others of smaller R.F. are needed in a battalion to provide wider distribution to include more non-commissioned officers.

2. Prior to the operation there was an over-abundance of high altitude vertical photos and a corresponding dearth of low enlarged obliques.

High altitude verticals were of limited use, giving only a means of broad terrain study and a likewise broad assessment of overall defensive capabilities.

This battalion found enlarged obliques of the beach very useful and would welcome quantities of low altitude (400-800 feet) obliques covering beach and entire area of projected operation taken from more than one direction. Enlargements of such obliques and delivery in good time prior to landing are necessary to efficient assessment of enemy capabilities and operational decisions.

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ANNEX BAKER TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

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Timeliness and quality of photos received during operations were of good value. The obliques were low and in many cases represented the only means of fixing locations exactly.

3. The hydrographic information received, though small in amount, was generally accurate and valuable.

4. The distribution of material from the R-2 was prompt and liberal.

Of great assistance was the marking of target square area locations on oblique photos disseminated during the operation.

R-2 and D-2 periodic reports were timely and effective. Overlays and interrogations reports were of value not only within a given zone of action, but supplied an accurate means of knowing the situation on the division front. This led to the satisfaction of a need which front lines have repeatedly appreciated.

5. It is recommended that another Japanese Language School be conducted for picked enlisted personnel from infantry companies. The object of the school should be limited to insure ability in the student to speak and understand simple conversation. Immediate questioning of POWs on the spot would be of great assistance in more effective and speedy negotiation of the particular locality of capture.

6. Cooperation by companies in collecting enemy documents and material was superlative. Diligence in obtaining any intelligence matter asked for was remarkable in the face of difficult circumstances. This is partly to be accounted for in the usefulness the companies found in the intelligence scouts. Company commanders found these men trained in tactics and weapons as well as intelligence. Reliance on these personnel to assist in operations led to recognition of the close relationship between intelligence and operational functions. Consequently intelligence matter was given added importance.

Repetition of the instruction of infantry companies in the appearance of an enemy field order and character denoting secret

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ANNEX BAKER TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

information would be advisable.

7. Japanese language personnel were helpful in classifying documents according to their priority.

Written propaganda resulted in no observed effect. Improvement might come in an emphasis on the absence of aid from the homeland which was so close. A gradual strengthening of the point as the time passed might bring reaction. Finally, the appeal might be worked out to encourage the soldier to break relations with higher echelons by reason of breach of faith, and surrender honorably and safely.

8. Liaison with R-2 was good. This fact was reflected in the prompt action taken on any information sent from the battalion.

9. Counter-intelligence measures and precautions taken were normal. More precautions will be necessary in the future to combat enemy wire-tapping techniques.

10. Special enemy tactics observed included the wearing of marine clothing and use of the disguise to confuse friendly units as to the flanks.

Jap tanks were dug in, or strongly revetted and excellently camouflaged. This use availed the enemy of mobile pill boxes and allowed an efficient, flexible anti-tank defense.

The first inclination to employ air bursts was observed on this operation. Dual purpose AA fire plus air bursts from rifle grenades were employed by the Jap against our personnel.

Individual defensive installations were well-camouflaged and showed a small aperture at the end of a twisting passage. The result was a hard position to locate. A direct hit was required to destroy it. In the northern portion of the island twisting tunnels carved in the rocks which opened in small apertures permitted limited, but well-chosen fields of fire.

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ANNEX BAKER TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

For the first time, the Jap force facing the Fourth Marine Division conducted the defense with great efficiency and in accordance with Western World conceptions. The enemy definitely massed artillery and mortar fires and when overall coordination became impractical, the defense was carried on by unit commanders in separate, previously designated zones. Consistent with this view and reflecting it was the lack of Banzai attacks until the desperate end.

Encountered in past operations and again on this one were distinct tendencies which indicate that the Japanese basic piece of defensive ground is a corridor which may vary in size and shape from a narrow draw to a wide sweeping amphitheater.

Positions on opposite sides of the corridor were mutually supporting and the cross fires thereby created made attack from the front or flanks extremely difficult. The effectiveness of this system was increased by registration of protective mortar fires covering the dug in positions. Further advantage was gained by holding fire, allowing marine units to enter the corridor, then opening up with rifle, machine gun and mortar fires (in that order).

This is amply illustrated by the giant hinge of enemy defense formed by the large amphitheatre of ground (outlined in Target Areas 182 E; 183 A,B,C,D,E; 184 F,K; 183 I,Y; 166 D) which overlooked the East Boat Basin and the entirety of Blue and Yellow Beaches. Concentric lines of defense were laid out beachward from the semicircle outlined above. The whole deep hinge so constructed was backed by a "horseshoe", the right forward toe of which was hill 382. The "horseshoe" is laid out in Target Areas 200 Y; 201 P,Q,V, and 184 B. Other examples of this doctrine appeared in the defense of draws running more or less radially from the central high ground around Motoyama to the sea, and in the strength of the amphitheatre in TA 183 I,J.

Of course auxiliary defense zones held these corridor-like localities together in a strong and ingenious manner.

11. Clearly the enemy anticipated our landing and systematically unrolled his defensive scheme with stage after stage of the advance.

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ANNEX BAKER TO ANNEX GEORGE TO RCT 23 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)
(Continued)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the target area numbers and the corner letters be darkened by a color which will aid the reading yet not obscure other features of the map.
2. It is recommended that a contour interval of 10 feet be used in the future.
3. It is recommended that low altitude photos of the road systems be made to show the exact character and trace of such.
4. It is recommended that a proper amount of material and sufficient allotment of time be made available for schools in map reading and API for all infantry NCO's during the training stage.
5. It is recommended that a battalion be supplied fifteen complete sets of enlarged low altitude, oblique photos covering not only beach but also inland areas for the briefing stage.
6. It is recommended that problems similar to the "Island X" exercise be continued in training. Maps used in briefing stage should not bear the name of the location.
7. On one occasion the same CP location was used successively as a consequence there was a collection of wire along a single route. It is recommended that as far as, possible, this be avoided. Otherwise the enemy is provided, good opportunity for wire-tapping and a guide to CP installations.

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GEORGE TO RCT 28 OPERATION REPORT (IWO JIMA)

OPERATION

A. INFANTRY:

Infantry operations and tactics on Iwo Jima was normal in so far as was practicable. The greatest detriment to the infantry occurred on Dog-Day and continued throughout the operation. This consisted of the unusually large casualties to officers of all ranks, key non-commissioned officers and specialist personnel in the early stages of the battle. As early as Dog Plus Two Days the fighting power and efficiency of the rifle companies had been reduced greatly as a result of the loss of such vital men. The execution of normal assault tactics and plain small unit maneuvering was made difficult due to the early loss of group and squad leaders. Heavy casualties early in the operation of key personnel such as flamethrower men, bazooka men, and demolition teams added to the difficulties of the small infantry units.

Terrain adversely effected infantry tactics in that certain areas of the island were almost prohibitive to normal tactical operations because of the extremely broken character of the terrain. This was especially true in the north eastern portion of the island.

New replacement troops were assigned to line units while actively engaged. The assigned replacements were not fully trained and had no previous combat experience. They were not familiar with the organization and did not know either the officers or the men of the unit to which assigned; they were reluctant to take the initiative in battle and each man had to be told individually what his particular job would be in each phase of the attack. In short, the replacements assigned to this BLT while on Iwo Jima imposed a great burden on the veteran officers and men. During the day in the prosecution of the attack, the fear and hesitancy of replacements to carry out assigned jobs only increased the burden of small unit leaders. As a result, the more seasoned and experienced troops were forced to expose themselves dangerously in order to get the replacements to move. This unfortunately resulted in the loss of many extremely valuable officers and men. The junior officer replacements assigned to the battalion, however, did commendable work throughout their service with the organization.

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The general policy that officers must be assigned to jobs in battle according to TO designation was not adhered to. For example, that a company commander must be a captain, a platoon leader must be a second lieutenant. This is poor policy; for in battle, it is not the rank that counts, it is the man for the job. More frequently than not, it has been found true that some lieutenants can do better jobs than some captains; that old and experienced non-commissioned officers make better platoon leaders than new and inexperienced second lieutenants.

Considerable improvement was noted over previous operations in the fact that attacks were usually halted early enough each day to allow ample opportunity for troops in the line to "Sew Up" for night defense.

Frequently during the operation difficulty was experienced in determining the map location of troops on the ground. Often this was due to inaccuracies of the map. The character of the terrain was such that observation was limited to a few yards. This in addition to map inaccuracies resulted in a constant struggle to determine map location.

In the insistance on a constant aggressive advance by the actual attack forces, it is felt that higher echelon should bear in mind that the officers and men in the line almost without exception are deeply imbued with a desire to make progress in the attack which is not stimulated by constant verbal haranguing unless it becomes obvious that serious tactical errors have been made.

In the attack where it was necessary for a battalion to pass through or relieve, this unit favored a relief on the line prior to daylight. In this manner the unnecessary exposure of a large number of troops was avoided and fewer casualties were suffered from hostile mortar and artillery fire than was the case when a passage of the lines for continuation of the attack was attempted.

"Tying in" and filling gaps between adjacent units will continue to be a delicate and hazardous maneuver. The assignment to

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troops from reserve elements had the responsibility of reconnaissance of the area prepared to fill gaps and "tie in" on short notice facilitated this procedure greatly. Units in the line operating at reduced strength found it difficult and often impossible to fill in gaps when they could barely cover the frontage in the assigned zone of action.

81 mm MORTAR PLATOON

The 81 mm mortar platoon was boated in four LVT(4)s in the sixth wave, scheduled to land at H plus 22 minutes. The actual landing was effected at H plus 20 minutes (0920). The platoon landed on the center of Beach Yellow Two and advanced inland about 150 yards to a position in the vicinity of the third terrace.

One section was in position and firing at 0940. The second section, which landed about 300 yards to the south, was in a firing position at 1000. Their initial fires were concentrated on the edge of Airfield Number One and the enemy positions near the base of the turning apron.

Keeping ammunition at the guns proved quite a problem the first day because of the intense counter battery mortar and artillery fire received in the position area. However, approximately 450 rounds of the 600 rounds brought in initially were moved to the guns. The other 150 rounds were caught by the tide and washed out to sea before they could be recovered.

During the first day the platoon received intense counter battery fire. About 1600, two of the guns were knocked out by Japanese mortars. Six men were killed and seven wounded around the positions. One of the guns was salvaged, and the platoon operated with three guns for the remainder of the operations.

On the morning of Dog Plus Nine, the platoon took positions in Target Area 183 F and supported the attack on Hill 382 and ridge line running east from it. Several smoke screens were layed to conceal the withdrawal of the advance units to a more favorable position for the night, and the evacuation of wounded. Harrassing fires were delivered throughout the night.

On the morning of Dog Plus Fifteen this platoon took over the mortar positions and ammunition of the mortar platoon of BLT 3/24, and supported the attack from these positions until the zone of action was secured. The guns were in a position to support the adjacent units as well as our own units.

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The results of general supporting fires were negligible throughout the operation, but harrassing fires at night helped greatly in keeping down the enemy's mortar fires.

The amount of ammunition expended on the operation was approximately 3000 rounds. Casualties in the platoon were 8 killed and 17 wounded.

It is recommended that 81 mm mortar illumination shells be manufactured to supplement present means of night illumination. It is also recommended that a time fuse be perfected for anti-personnel shells.

B. AVIATION.

The initial disposition of the ALP for the landing was four enlisted men and the ALO in Free Boat 1 carrying a TBX-8 and accessories, 2 536's, assault wire, 1 EE-8 phone and a spare set of batteries. The radio jeep and driver were embarked on an LCVP and landed on Dog Plus Three. One enlisted man was detailed with the jeep trailer and landed on Dog Plus Five. The trailer carried extra batteries and accessories, packs and equipment of the ALP.

The preliminary heavy strikes were frequently ineffective against enemy installations. Huge craters from heavy bombs were sometimes 10 to 20 yards from an installation. None the less the installation remained intact.

The extensive pre-How Hour strikes helped psychologically and added a great deal of fire power but the effects could not be determined. The napalm strikes were observed going in but many of the bombs appeared to be duds. The strafing strikes parallel to the beach appeared effective, continuous and well coordinated.

The battalion commander was advised as to availability of aircraft and types of armament, targets suitable to air and probable time interval on particular strikes. Liaison with artillery and Naval Gunfire was maintained by physical contact. A few close support missions were requested and targets with WP or YS. However, the nature of the terrain frequently prohibited observation for di-

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recting strikes.

Communications with ASC were maintained continuously by TBX-8 and later with an ANVRC-1 (mobile equipment). Equipment was adequate and personnel sufficient. Equipment to contact support aircraft was on hand. However the ALO merely monitored the observers net.

Targets were marked with WP or YS from artillery or from marker rockets from aircraft. Front line panels were used but marking of lines with colored smoke grenades was never effected.

Coordination of air strikes with the other support weapons was impossible because of the undependability of air. There was a lack of supporting aircraft from about Dog Plus Eight to Dog Plus Nine. The interval between origination of a request and its execution was very unsatisfactory. In some instances the interval was four and a half hours, the average being about two hours.

Dummy attacks to cover the advance of friendly troops were never intentionally requested. However, aircraft being adjusted on a target within the proximity of our lines by numerous diving attacks appeared to have the effect of keeping the enemy under cover.

Due to the terrain, control of aircraft from the ground was not practical for this unit ALO. In some instances, directing a strike was effected by another ALO. However the SAR net was used to transmit all adjustments to ASC in directing these strikes. This type of indirect control was hardly commendable since it confined the net to one ALO for great lengths of time. The indirect adjustments took longer than direct control by an ALO. On some occasions a superfluous number of dummy runs were made. During the coaching of an attack, the SAR net was rendered practically useless for an ALO for any missions.

Smoke was used to mark targets but due to the confusion of smoke and dust from HE, the YS and WP was sometimes indistinct. If a colored smoke shell other than YS were used, a target might be more clearly marked.

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C. NAVAL GUNFIRE.

Naval Gunfire was considerably hampered in this operation by the lack of observation. In only rare instances was it possible for SFCP to observe targets being fired upon. Without the aid of VOF planes - which in most cases proved invaluable - practically nothing but blind coverage of areas could have been accomplished. In one instance, the observer was placed aboard the direct support ship and fired with what observation could be had from seaward. In this instance it was found feasible and safe, due to the terrain, to fire directly towards our own lines. Illumination was good to excellent with ships showing good understanding of problems in both this and normal destructive fires.

Procedure and communication in most all cases was good. Very little trouble was experienced in contacting ships, however, some difficulty did arise in SFCP raising spotter planes.

After due consideration of the part played by Naval Gunfire in three operations, (Marshalls, Marianas and Iwo) it is believed the assignment of personnel for the conduct of fire ashore is uneconomical. It appears unnecessary to have two officers and 12 enlisted men continuously with each battalion. It seems likely that equally good results could be obtained by the assignment to RCT Headquarters of a Naval Liaison Officer and a pool of spotting officers who could be assigned to BLTs as requested. It is believed that an RCT could be adequately taken care of with a total of 3 marine officers, 1 naval officer and from 25 to 30 enlisted men instead of the present total of 3 marine officers, 4 naval officers and 42 enlisted.

D. ARTILLERY.

The operation of supporting artillery during the operation was normal. Artillery attachments to the BLT consisted of a Liaison Team with the Bn CP and FO parties with the companies in the assault. Limitations on observation imposed by the terrain reduced the effectiveness of fire during most of the operation. Large amounts of artillery were fired on known or suspected enemy mortar, rocket and artillery emplacements selected from the map and aerial photographs.

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The immediate effect of this fire was evidenced in the fact that fire from enemy guns ceased when selected target area locations were subjected to fire from friendly artillery. Night fires were normal defensive variety, with additional areas being selected for interdiction and harassing missions.

E. TANKS.

Tank-infantry coordination in the usual sense on the Iwo Jima operation was seriously impaired due to the terrain, and mines. In certain areas it was impossible for tanks to maneuver into positions from which to support the infantry by fire. Frequently, roads had to be made by a bulldozer tank in order for the vehicles to get to forward areas and operate with infantry units. During certain phases of the operation, the company commanders preferred to have the tanks at the rear to be called forward when needed. This was due to the fact that the mere appearance of a tank in the open with the advancing infantry usually brought heavy Jap artillery and mortar fire to bear around the tank and consequently into the lines of advancing troops. When tank attachments were assigned to the battalion for a days operation, a tank Liaison Officer was present at the battalion CP to coordinate the tank operation with the battalion commander and also to advise and recommend tank employment.

F. ROCKETS.

A rocket section was available to this battalion most of the time during its period in the line. Again, the limitations of terrain reduced the effectiveness of the rockets for supporting missions. For the most part the rockets were used to thicken the preparation fires for an attack and were usually fired immediately following the King Hour artillery preparation. During the attack, rocket barrages were fired into known areas of strong resistance mainly for softening up purposes. No accurate information is available as to the direct results of the rockets on the enemy during this operation. However, it is considered from the standpoint of potential benefits to the morale of friendly troops and the demoralizing effect on the enemy, that the barrage rocket still continues to be a valuable supporting arm.

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The organic rocket jeep was not employed due to extensive damage to the projector early in the operation.

G. WAR DOGS.

Although War Dogs were available to this battalion on call, they were employed only on one or two occasions. This employment consisted of using the dogs in the vicinity of the battalion command post to supplement the normal defense. The uses to which the dogs were put by this battalion were so limited that no basis was provided on which to evaluate their tactical usefulness.

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