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HEADQUARTERS

2d BATTALION, 26th MARINES, 5th MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE  
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

18 April 1945

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From: Commanding Officer.  
To : The Commanding Officer, 26th Marines.  
Subject: Action Report on Iwo Jima Operation, 19 February, 1945  
to 27 March, 1945.  
References: (a) 5thMarDiv General Order No. 3A, 18 January, 1945.  
(b) 5thMarDiv Memo No. 4A., 17 March, 1945.  
Enclosures: (A) Action Report, LT 2-26.

1. In compliance with directives contained in references (a) and (b), the attached report of action against the enemy on Iwo Jima Island by Landing Team 2-26, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph P. Sayers, USMC, Commanding, is submitted herewith, Enclosure (A).

*Joseph P. Sayers*  
JOSEPH P. SAYERS

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Annex QUEEN, Appendix 4

The  
Report Of Action Against The Enemy

On  
Iwo Jima Island

By  
Landing Team 2-26

From 19 February 1945 to 27 March 1945

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PART I  
INTRODUCTION

When this organization landed on Iwo Jima on 19 February, 1945, it was in a high state of efficiency, well-equipped, and its personnel in excellent physical condition. Organized and trained as a unit for more than one year, its personnel included ex-parachutists, ex-raiders, marines who had been combat with other divisions, and some who were serving with a combat organization for the first time. In the difficult campaign that ensued the unit accomplished its missions in a commendable manner. Some errors were made, and many things learned by even the most experienced hands. It is the purpose of this report to record the experiences and difficulties encountered, and to recommend improvements in the hope that they will prove useful in future operations.

PART II  
PRELIMINARIES

A. Training

1. Beginning on 4 November, 1944, with an LVT landing exercise at Hapuna Bay, Hawaii, T. H., this organization commenced training with the specific purpose of preparing for the Detachment Operation in that an "Island X" map, simulating Iwo Jima, was used. During this exercise initial plans concerning boat assignment tables and landing diagrams were conceived.

2. On 14 November, 1944, certain members of the battalion staff were briefed on the Iwo Jima Operation at Camp Tarawa, Hawaii. From this date onward, concurrently and in addition to the normal training carried on by troops, the battalion staff studied plans and orders for the Iwo Jima Operation. It also participated in a 5th Marine Division CPX, and a V Amphibious Corps CPX on 3 December, 1945, and 20-21 December, 1945, respectively. The official map of Iwo Jima for the Detachment Operation was used, and emphasis was placed on the use of supporting elements, proper procedure for requesting such support, and communications.

3. On 4 January, 1945, this landing team was fully embarked aboard the U.S.S. HOCKING (APA 121), sailed from Hilo, Hawaii on 5 January, 1945, and arrived at Pearl Harbor, T. H. on 6 January, 1945. From 5 January, 1945, to 13 January, this landing team participated in ship and debarkation drills. From 13 January to 18 January three rehearsals were held off Maui, Hawaii, with an actual landing being effected on 15 January. Further problems and defects in landing plans were "ironed out" as a result of these rehearsals.

4. While enroute from Hawaii to Saipan, this landing team carried on training in intelligence subjects, first aid, briefing for the operation, physical conditioning, and indoctrination in pertinent SOP's.

B. Planning

1. The Task Organization of LT226 was as follows:

2dBn, 26thMar, 5thMarDiv.,	LtCol. Joseph P. Sayers, USMC,
2dPlat, Co"A", 5thEngrBn.	Commanding.
Det CollSect, Co"A", 5thMedBn.	
Det, 5th JASCO	
Det R-2 Section	
2dPlat, 37MM Section, RegtWpnsCo.	

2. Because of its assignment as the reserve landing team of the reserve Combat Team (CT-26) of the V Amphibious Corps, this Landing Team issued no written Operation Plan, and utilized the operation plans of higher echelons, supplemented by verbal instructions, exclusively. Extensive study of both the 5th Marine Division and 4th Marine Division Operation Plans, those of their Combat Teams, and a detailed study of all terrain and beaches was made in order to be prepared for any eventuality.

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Annex QUEEN, Appendix 4 (LT 2-26 Report, Preliminaries)

3. The Ship-to-Shore Plan provided for the landing of CT-26 Headquarters, followed by LT 2-26. It was formulated on the assumption that this landing team would land on a secured beachhead.

4. Landing Team vehicles were combat loaded, and priority was given to ammunition whose rapid expenditure was anticipated (i.e. mortar and machine gun ammunition) and to demolitions too bulky to be hand carried ashore by personnel (i.e. shaped charges and bangalore torpedoes). Two hand-carts were made available to each assault squad, and special precautions were taken that heavy machine guns and reserve flame-throwers be landed as soon as possible, on the proper beach. The pre-landing of vehicles and materials reduced the total time of debarkation considerably, and kept to a minimum the period of time in which troops were required to be in small boats.

C. Embarkation

1. Embarkation of troops aboard APA 121, USS HOCKING, LtCol Joseph P. Sayers, USMC, Commanding Officer of Troops, was completed on 4 January 1945 at Hilo, Hawaii. The following troops were embarked;

	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
2dBn, 26thMar	36	903
H&SCo, 26thMar	22	168
Co"A", 5thEngrBn	3	91
27th Repln	2	75
Co"A", 5thMedBn.	7	61
5th JASCO	5	25
OrdCo	1	27
MPCo	1	25
HqBn, 5thMarDiv.	3	3
5thAmphTruck		11
5thMTBn.		2
Co"A", 5thTank		15
1st Band Section		28
31st NCB		2
JICPOA		1
ARC	1	0
Total	<u>81</u>	<u>1440</u>

2. With the exception of a few minor changes, the number of troops aboard and the organizations embarked remained substantially the same throughout the voyage.

3. The Base Echelon, 2dBn, 26thMarines, which remained in Kamuela, Hawaii, consisted of one warrant officer and twenty-one enlisted men.

D. Rehearsals

1. Rehearsals at Maui were extremely valuable as tests for ship-to-shore movement plans, and as opportunities to correct details and improve technique. The rehearsal off Saipan on 13Feb45 was conducted under adverse weather conditions. It is not believed that any benefit was derived from this debarkation drill. Swells were high and vehicles could not be unloaded. Combat equipment

was wet by salt water.

E. Rehabilitation Period

1. A combined liberty and organized recreation plan was followed from 19Jan45 to 26Jan45 as a rehabilitation plan. Twenty-five per cent of the troops embarked aboard APA 121 were given liberty daily, and twenty-five per cent were sent on organized recreation parties, supervised by officers, to Richardson Field, Pearl Harbor, T.H.

F. Movement to Objective

1. APA 121 sailed from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on 27 January, 1945, and arrived at Eniwetok, Marshall Islands on 5 February, 1945. Fuel and provisions were taken aboard here, and the ship sailed on 7 February, 1945 for Garapan Harbor, Saipan, where it arrived on 11 February, 1945. On 16Feb45 APA 121 sailed from Saipan for Iwo Jima, where it arrived on 19Feb45.

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PART III  
CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

19Feb45 (D Day)

In the early morning the USS HOCKING (APA 121) "lay to" about 1500 yards off the Eastern Beach of Iwo Jima. The weather was favorable for the landing, with clear skies and calm waters. Orders to prepare for debarkation were received from the Combat Team Commander at 1130, and debarkation commenced at 1200. The advance echelon of the LT 2-26 Command Post, consisting of Major Amedeo Rea, Bn Executive Officer, First Lieutenant Royer "G" Warren, S-3, Second Lieutenant William M. Adams Jr., S-2, and Company guides preceded the troops ashore for the purpose of reconnaissance. LT 2-26 landed on Red Beach #2 under mortar and artillery fire, and "dug in" on the beach awaiting orders. At about 1730 guides from the reconnaissance party contacted the companies on the beach, and they proceeded to a reserve assembly area at 147-J. Enroute intermittent mortar, artillery, machine gun, and sniper fire was encountered, and some casualties occurred. LT 2-26 was intact with the exception of one section of the 81MM Mortar Platoon, which landed on Yellow Beach #1 and did not rejoin the organization for thirty-six hours. The men "dug in" in darkness. Some enemy infiltration occurred during the night, and tanks parked in the vicinity of the assembly area drew artillery fire on the adjacent troops.

20Feb45 (D plus 1)

At 0300 a warning order was received to be prepared to support the attack of the Twenty-seventh Marines that day. However, the order was not put into execution, and the organization remained in the same assembly area. Unloading of APA 121 commenced at 0830. Anti-sniper patrols were sent out with no success, and the organization was under almost constant artillery and mortar fire. During the night orders were received to move to a forward assembly area in rear of the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines the following morning.

21Feb45 (D plus 2)

At 0800 the movement to the new assembly area at 163 D,E,J, was begun. In the new assembly area highly accurate enemy artillery fire was received, and a request for reconnaissance of Kama and Kangoku Rocks was requested as possible locations of enemy observation posts. The movement to the assembly area was effected under heavy and accurate sniper fire. For the first time individual contact was made with enemy troops. Patrols attacked by-passed pill-boxes along the beach from which fire was being received. At 1630 orders were received to move to an assembly area at 164 A,B, and F with the mission of protecting the left flank of the 27th Marines in the event of counterattack along the Western Beach. At about 2130 word was received of an enemy counterlanding on the beach northwest of the battalion area in the vicinity of the West Boat Basin. Companies were alerted. Company "F" was maneuvered into a position facing the beach to reenforce Company "E", and mortar fire was placed on the beach. The enemy activity along the beach ceased, and twenty



enemy dead were counted the next day. Whether it was an enemy counterlanding or infiltration was not determined. A platoon of Company "F" was used to carry ammunition to the 1st Battalion, 26th Marines. The first incident revealing the compromise of the password occurred during the night when PFC Thomas J. Farkas of Company "F" challenged a moving figure. Unsatisfied with the mispronunciation of "Chevrolet", Farkas challenged again. "Chevrolet" was mispronounced again, and Farkas fired and killed the challenged person, who proved to be Japanese the next morning. Orders were received during the night to pass through the 3d Battalion, 27th Marines in attack at 0800 the next day.

22Feb45. (D plus 3)

At 0500 the 2d Platoon, Company "F", reenforced by a machine gun section under command of 2d Lieutenant Earnest Clark, was dispatched to the sulphur pit on the Western Beach in rear of the 1st Battalion, 26th Marines, to destroy enemy troops in hiding there. The platoon accomplished its mission, and returned in time to rejoin its company prior to K hour. At 0800 the battalion relieved the 3d Battalion, 27th Marines in the front lines at 181 H, J, and I (center), seventy-five yards south of the east-west road marking O-1. The relief was effected under one of the most severe artillery and mortar barrages yet received. The Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines became a casualty in the early morning, and a delay in the K hour resulted. The battalion finally attacked in a heavy rainfall, with Company "D", Captain Thomas M. Fields, commanding, on the right; Company "E", Captain Eugene B. Higgins commanding, on the left; and Company "F", Captain Frank C. Caldwell commanding, in reserve. In the face of heavy machine gun and mortar fire from the ridge on the exposed right flank, the battalion advanced five hundred yards to 198 R, S, T and stopped to reorganize. During the attack four friendly tanks unexpectedly arrived, and in error fired on the troops, causing several casualties. They were finally brought under control, and supported the attack until two were "knocked out" by land mines. The battalions on both flanks had not advanced, and in the late afternoon "D" and "E" companies were ordered to fall back to tie in with the other organizations for the night. The withdrawal was covered by the 2d Platoon, Company "F". Casualties were severe, a total of 120 being recorded for the day. The "tying-in" necessitated a withdrawal of four hundred yards to O-1. It was on this day that Platoon Sergeant William H. Van Dyke of Company "D" was killed while climbing into a disabled tank in an effort to cover the withdrawal by tank fire, and Second Lieutenant Earnest A. Clark personally carried four wounded marines to safety while under heavy fire. Other heroic deeds, too numerous to record here, were enacted on this most critical day. The heavy rain, the fierce enemy opposition, and the necessity to relinquish the dearly paid-for ground because of exposed flanks resulted in the most severe drop in morale and efficiency of the organization for the entire operation. Mortar and artillery continued to harrass the troops all night, and orders were received to attack at 0730 the next day.

23Feb45 (D plus 4)

X hour was postponed in order to allow LT 3-26 to echelon to the left rear to conform with the slope of the ground (high ridge on right, low beach on left). Many weapons had been rendered inoperative by rain and sand. X hour was finally postponed till the next day in order to allow the Third Marine Division on the 26th Marines' right to come up on line. At about 1200 Lt. Col. Joseph P. Sayers, USMC, was wounded by shrapnel at the Battalion Command Post, and Major Amedeo Rea assumed command of the Battalion. At 2130 orders were received to attack the next day on signal of a rocket barrage.

24Feb45 (D plus 5)

The rocket barrage was delivered at 1330, and the attack began with Company "E" on the left and Company "D" on the right. An advance of five hundred yards was effected to 198 R,S, and T. The 2d Battalion, 27th Marines on the left did not keep up with the advance. Company "D" of this organization, having been "squeezed out" by a narrowing front during the attack, was used to fill the gap on the left between Company "E", 26th Marines, and the 2d Battalion, 27th Marines. Consolidation of lines during the night was extremely difficult due to heavy sniper and mortar fire. Stretcher bearers suffered particularly heavy casualties, as did carrying parties. Officer casualties were high, and it was necessary for remaining leaders to expose themselves constantly in order to maintain control. 1stLt Bernard L. Pedneau of Company "E", acting both as company executive officer and platoon leader, executed the duties of both offices under heavy fire in a most creditable manner.

25Feb45 (D plus 6)

The attack was once again postponed because the Third Marine Division had not yet advanced as far as the 26th Marine's front line. Accurate enemy artillery fire continued to fall on the Battalion Command Post, which was in defilade from observation from enemy-held ground, and reconnaissance of Kana and Kangaku rocks was again requested. That night a Navajo Indian mistaken as Japanese, was "captured" by Company "F". His poor English, made even less understandable by fright put him in a difficult situation for a while. Fortunately, he was unharmed, and was finally identified by another Navajo as a marine. That night orders were received to attack the next morning on signal of a rocket barrage.

26Feb45 (D plus 7)

At 0300 orders were received to attack at 0800. Companies "E" and "D" jumped off on schedule, advancing about fifty yards under heavy opposition. Company "F", until now not committed, passed through Company "E" at 1000, and Company "E" reverted to battalion reserve. Advance was slow but steady against an enemy strong point consisting of pillboxes and honeycombed caves at 198 N&O. Tanks supported the attack effectively until they drew artillery fire and were withdrawn. The fire of the tanks on this occasion was directed by PFC Jack Russell of Company "F", who stood by the tanks and designated targets by firing his BAR. The bazooka and hand grenade were established as indispensable weapons

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in attacking pillboxes and caves in the minds of the men when Corporal John G. Folsom and Corporal Harold E. Trentham, both of Company "F", destroyed five pillboxes and flushed a number of Japs from numerous caves using the weapons. Company "F", Captain Caldwell commanding, had been purposely retained in reserve until this day, and when finally committed lived up to all expectations with a determined, high-spirited attack that carried them a total of 250 yards for the day. For the first time during the campaign numerous enemy soldiers could be seen and "closed with", and the result was definite upsurge of morale. During the attack Captain Higgins, the only remaining officer of Company "E", was wounded, and 1st Sergeant Jack V. Ganzonieri took command. Lt Warren, S-3, and Captain Welihan, S-1, were also wounded and evacuated when the battalion received a direct hit from artillery. Company "D"&"F" "dug in" at 198 M, N, and O for the night. It was on this day that smoke was first used for covering the retrieving of casualties in front of the lines. During the attack Corporal Harold W. Crabtree had been killed, and at 1700 his body was lying in front of the Company "D" lines. He had been one of the finest marines of this organization, a squad leader, and highly popular with all hands. The "word" was passed among the men that they were going to bring his body back. There was heavy sniper fire from all directions. Permission was granted to lay a smoke screen with .81 calibre smoke shells to the front. The brother of Corporal Crabtree, Corp Luther C. Crabtree, and others went forward under cover of the smoke, and retrieved the body and several other casualties. Later that night there were several attempts at infiltration. At the Company "D" Observation Post, Captain Fields and Lt. Horvath detected three Japs walking boldly and nonchalantly within 25 feet of them, carrying pictric acid satchel charges. The two officers routed the Japs with hand grenades, killing one. At 2045 Sgt. Carl A. Rasmussen, stationed at the Battalion O.P. observed two hundred to three hundred enemy coming over Hill 362. Artillery and naval gunfire were directed on the target. That night orders were received that the organization would be relieved by the 1st Battalion, 27th Marines at 0800 the next morning.

27Feb45 (D plus 8)

Relieved by the 1st Bn, 27th Marines at 0800 and moved to assembly area at 181 L&M. The 2d Platoon, Company "A", 5th Engr Bn, 2d Lt. John J. Rausch, commanding, that had been used to unload ship, moving supplies, and constructing roads to the battalion dump, was released to its parent organization. A defense of the beach to the left of the assembly area was organized using the 2d 37MM Platoon, Weapons Company. Half tracks from the Regimental Weapons Company fired on Kama Rocks. Lt. Herbert E. Van Meter, chaplain, USNR, collected the dead and retrieved bodies that had received hasty burial. Equipment was salvaged, "10 in 1" rations, which proved to be highly popular were issued, and toilet articles, tobacco, and writing paper received from Mr. Steward M. Strong, American Red Cross representative, all of which greatly improved morale. Captain Fields, became Battalion Executive Officer, 1st Lt Horvath took command of Company "D", and Captain Harold F. Gardner took command of Company "E". The battalion was in division reserve.

Annex QUEEN, Appendix 4 (LT 2-26 Report, Narrative)

28Feb45 (D plus 9)

At 0945 the battalion reverted to 27th Marines control, and moved to an assembly area at 198 O and 199 K at 1100. Several Japs were killed in caves behind the lines, and some highly important enemy documents captured. At 1500 Company "F" reinforced the lines of the 3d Battalion, 27th Marines, and one platoon of Company "D" reinforced the 1stBn, 26th Marines line in the vicinity of 215 T. Four listening posts were established along the beach, utilizing one dog and a fire group at each post. The only resistance during the night was from the dogs, who were kept awake with great difficulty by constant prodding.

1Mar45 (D plus 10)

At 0800 the Battalion reverted to 26th Marines control, and returned to the assembly area at 181 L&M. At 1245 a warning order that the Battalion would be committed on the 28th Marines left flank was received. Lt. Adams, S-3, made a reconnaissance at 215 N&O. The order was belayed, and at 1600 orders were received to move to an assembly area at 199 H&I instead. At 1800 the Battalion was in position in the new assembly area. Four officers and 99 enlisted arrived after dark as replacements. From their actions and movement it was apparent that they had not been in front lines before, and were in need of much indoctrination. When the rocket-type weapon often referred to as "Burping Betty" went off, and the more experienced marines scattered for foxholes, the replacements stood around wondering at the commotion. However, when the projectile landed, the replacements "caught on" immediately, and needed no further indoctrination on that score. During the night numerous by-passed Japs were killed. At 2200 orders were received to support the attack of the 3dBn, 26th Marines the next day.

2Mar45 (D plus 11)

At 0815 a gap occurred between the 3dBn, 26th Marines, and the 1stBn, 28th Marines. Companies "D" and "F" were used to fill the gap. Some advance was made, and another K-hour was set at 1415 for a final drive for the day. However at 1400 orders were received to disengage from the enemy immediately and proceed to the right flank of the 3dBn, 26th Marines, to close another gap. The disengagement was effected under heavy sniper fire, and numerous casualties received. The movement to the new position led the battalion through mine fields and heavy sniper and mortar fire, with further complications arising from lack of information as to which battalion of the 21st Marines was to be contacted on the right of the gap. The gap was finally closed just as night fell, the engineers being used to clear mine fields. Company "F" was on the left and Company "E" on the right, the battalion line extending from R, J at 217H(SE) to Hill 362 at 235U. Caves were sealed in the Company "F" area, and hand grenade fights occurred during the night, with fifteen enemy dead accounted for.

3Mar45 (D plus 12)

At 0745 the battalion attacked in what was to be the most costly and successful attack of the operation for this organization. The plan was for Company "E" to "hold" on the right, and Company "F" to maneuver around in an

encircling movement with the high ground to its front as the objective. Company "D" relieved the left flank company of the 27th Marines at 0830. Tanks were used to cover the left flank of Company "F" by fire. Tank fire was directed by radio-Company to Bn C.P. to tank liaison man to tanks. Company "F" made a sustained drive of 600 yards to 234X and Y, gained the high ground in a fierce hand grenade fight, and held the ground in spite of heavy casualties. At 1600 Companies "D" and "E" attacked Hill 362. They advanced to the top of the hill, utilizing assault squads covered by machine gun fire all the way. Flame throwers, bazookas, and demolitions were used to their fullest extent in over-running a network of caves and pillboxes. The 37MM Platoon was used to tie in with the 3dBn, 26th Marines which was approximately 300 yards to the rear of Company "F". Grenade fights continued during the night on ground that was covered with caves. Flat trajectory weapons were useless except for direct targets of opportunity. 152 casualties were received on this day. Captain Gardner and Lt Horvath were casualties, 2dLt Richard A. Griswold taking command of Company "E", and 2dLt John McCaffrey of Company "D". By this time all the original officers and staff NCO's had become casualties in "E" Company, resulting in loss of personnel records. Japanese were reported in marine uniform. Orders were received to attack at 0745 the next morning.

4Mar45 (D plus 13)

The attack order was to remain in position on the left flank until the 3dBn, 26th Marines caught up, and to guide on the 1stBn, 27th Marines on the right. Company "D" was passed through by the 1stBn, 27th Marines on the right, and used to fill the gap on the Battalion left flank. 2dLt. McCaffrey was wounded, and Platoon Sergeant Ernest J. Buckley took command of Company "D". Tank fire was directed by having an infantry guide in the tank. This method proved most satisfactory.

5Mar45 (D plus 14)

There was no general K-hour, and the battalion remained in position on orders to await advances by the organizations on the left. The 1stBn, 26th Marines relieved Company "E", which reverted to battalion reserve. Enemy fire consisted of sniper and mortar fire, the volume and calibre of which was markedly on the decline. PFC Richard M. West of Company "F" directed tank fire by firing the tank machine guns from inside the tank. When Japs attacked a tank West covered the tank by machine gun fire, killing five Japs who were attempting to disable the tank.

6Mar45 (D plus 15)

The 1stBn, 26th Marines relieved the Battalion at 1130, and the Battalion moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of 217M. At 1815 orders were received to revert to AmphCorps Reserve on 7Mar45.

7Mar45 (D plus 16)

Moved back to assembly area at 199D as Corps Reserve at 0800. At 2130 received a Corps order to be prepared to reenforce the lines anywhere in the Corps lines on one hour notice.

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8Mar45 (D plus 17)

At 1830 the Battalion reverted to CT26 control, and at 2100 orders were received to relieve the 1stBn, 26th Marines two left flank companies the next day.

9Mar45 (D plus 18)

The Battalion moved from the assembly area at 0500, relieved two companies of the 1stBn, 26th Marines at 234 X&Y(North), and was ready to attack at 0700. Orders to attack did not arrive until 1545, at which time an attack was launched with Company "E" on the left and Company "D" on the right. Fifty yards were gained against heavy resistance, but the Battalion withdrew to the original positions for the night. 1stLt Harold O. Swaney took command of Company "D".

10Mar45 (D plus 19)

The Battalion attacked at 0800 with Company "F" on the left, Company "D" in the center, and Company "E" on the right. There was little advance due to heavy enemy resistance from a complicated network of draws, criss-crossing fire lanes, and exceptionally accurate rifle fire. The 2d 37mm Platoon was used effectively against pillboxes and a large blockhouse to the front until it drew heavy mortar and rifle fire. Tanks arrived at 1330, but had no fields of fire due to the nature of the terrain. The armored bulldozer could not operate due to mines and close enemy attacks. The 1st Platoon, Company "E", was sent around the left flank of Company "F" in an effort to outflank the resistance, 2dLt William B. Jenkins, platoon leader, was killed in the attempt, and the platoon was pinned down by machine gun fire whose source could not be located. The Battalion attacked again at 1400, advancing about 75 yards. It had become obvious that the main line of enemy resistance was to the front, and the terrain was most favorable to their defense. The uncanny accuracy of the enemy rifle fire caused many casualties, and forced the men to remain in almost stationary positions until they finally became acquainted with the fire lanes and "danger areas". That night the attached Engineer Platoon and Hq Company were used to close a gap between Companies "F" and "D". A recommendation was made to Regiment to "pocket" the resistance and make a main effort on the extreme right along the high ground. Orders were received to relieve the 1stBn, 26th Marines the next morning after being relieved by the 3dBn, 26th Marines. Total casualties for the day were 85.

11Mar45 (D plus 20)

At 0830 a difficult relief was effected by the 3dBn, 28th Marines, and this battalion in turn relieved the 1stBn, 26th Marines, with "E" and "F" companies on the line and Company "D" in reserve. At 1300 the Battalion attacked from its new position. Company "F" advanced 75 yards and managed to gain a better position. Company "F" captured three enemy guns in its advance. At 1100 Company "D" was committed on the Company "F" right flank. The battalion was attached to the 27th Marines on passing through LT-26.

12Mar45 (D plus 21)

The entire front lines attacked at 0630, but heavy opposition was encountered along the entire front. The enemy could not be seen, and all would be quiet until an attempt to advance was made, when accurate machine gun and rifle fire would open up from all directions. The Jap positions were in well-camouflaged caves and pillboxes. It was decided that new tactics must be used.

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Artillery, mortar, and small arms fire were ineffective, and the terrain too close for air bombardment. The only possible solution seemed to be tanks. The 2d Engr Platoon, commanded by 2dLt Cooley, was brought up. Under the protection of infantry, the engineers cleared a path of mines. Then the armored bulldozer was guided up by Lt Cooley, and made a road through the rocks to the front lines. Extensions were cut to each front line company, and tanks immediately brought up to fire to the front.

13Mar45 (D plus 22)

There was no K-hour, and the day was passed in extending roads and firing tanks. The infantry-engineer-tank coordination proved to be the solution to breaking the unusual and particularly strong line. Guides directed tank 75MM fire, flame-thrower tanks burned caves to the immediate front, and marines used sniper tactics, firing at all movement to the front. Half-tracks fired into caves at long range. Hopes were raised for cracking the resistance the next day. Late in the afternoon a small advance of 75 yards was made. The assault squad was combined with engineer personnel under Sergeant John W. Potter Jr., of Company "D", and were used very effectively in close fighting, sealing caves and knocking out pillboxes. 1stLt Swaney was wounded, and Sgt. Hubert J. Faltyn, though wounded twice, remained on the field and took command of Company "D". LT 2-26 reverted to CT-26 control at about 1800, the sector held passing to CT-26 responsibility.

14Mar45 (D plus 23)

Tanks were used at daybreak, and at 0810 Company "D" attacked, Companies "F" and "E" being relieved by the 3dBn, 26th Marines. Company "F" was soon committed on the left of Company "D". A rapid advance of 400 yards was made, in spite of low morale, fatigue, and an average strength of 70 men per company. Company "E" and the engineer personnel followed the attacking troops closely, sealing by-passed caves and mopping up. The armored bulldozer also followed closely behind the attacking troops, extending the roads. The enemy resistance had at last been broken, and the front lines "dug in" at 235 B(South) for the night. Company "E" and HqCo were again used to fill in gaps for the night. That night there was a great deal of infiltration, and numerous enemy killed.

15Mar45 (D plus 24)

Morale was very low, and the strain of many days in the line was evident. It was noted that the man became more careless, and exposed themselves more to fire when fatigued. Major Rea called the NCO's of Company "D" together and though exhausted they determined to make another concerted drive. The men responded, and at 0800 the attack began. At the end of the day, Companies "D" & "F" had gained another 350 yards to 251 V(North). Company "E" was used to "mop up" and that night filled a gap on the left of Company "F". During the attack a sheer cliff was by-passed, and then neutralized by tanks firing back at it. At 2230 orders were received that the 2dBn, 21st Marines would relieve the Battalion the next morning.

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Annex QUEEN, appendix 4 (LT 2-26 Report, Narrative)

16Mar45-27Mar45, inclusive. (D plus 25 to D plus 36, inclusive)

On 16Mar45 relieved at 0700, and arrived at 199D, in reserve, at 1030. The day was spent in cleaning up and resting. From 17-18Mar45 the Battalion remained in regimental reserve at 199D. Work of collecting dead, preparing reports, and reorganization was carried out. "B" rations were issued, a galley set up, and cooked meals served twice a day. The men visited the Division Cemetery, and numerous gravestones were cut from the soft rock and placed on graves. A high spirit of comradeship and pride prevailed in the Battalion. A flag belonging to the former Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Joseph P. Sayers, was raised in the Battalion Assembly Area.

On 19Mar45 "mopped-up" in the area assigned the Battalion by the Regimental Commander.

On 21Mar45 the Battalion attended the dedication ceremonies at the Fifth Division Cemetery. Ten men from this organization represented the 26th Marines as escort. On 24Mar45 the "mopping up" was completed of the area assigned this battalion.

At 1200 on 25Mar45, the Battalion boarded trucks and proceeded to Beach White on the Western Beach, boarded LST 746 at 1400, and embarked aboard the USS JOHN LAND (APA 167) from the LST at about 1600.

On 27Mar45 at 1730 APA 167 sailed from Iwo Jima, with the 2dBn, 26th Marines aboard, and as the ship drew away a minute of silence observed in memory of the marines who had been left behind.



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PART IV  
STAFF SECTION REPORT

A. Personnel Administration

a) S-1 Report.

1. The function of the personnel section was to account for the personnel of this organization and report, on specific occasions, the strength of the unit. In addition, records were to be kept showing the disposition of casualties leaving battalion control. The information was obtained from the Battalion Aid Station and the Company First Sergeants.

2. During periods when heavy casualties were occurring it was a physical impossibility to effect an entirely correct report. Information from the companies was not available at the prescribed times due to other more essential activities, and a full report could not be had from the Battalion Aid Station. Records of the Aid Station gave no evidence of those killed in action, or of casualties from this organization evacuated through other facilities.

3. The personnel section remained in the area of the Battalion Command Post until 2 March, when it was divided into a forward and rear group. Difficulties had been encountered because of the continual movement, heavy casualties, and loss of key personnel, and it was felt that the personnel section would operate more efficiently in a rear area. At this point additional information was requested as to burial data, as well as information on casualties evacuated from the island. Reports were dispatched from the Command Post to the rear area by runner and telephone. This approach to the administrative problem proved to be wise, as pertinent information was beginning to accumulate.

4. Casualties occurred among all the line company First Sergeants within a three day period. Shortly after a replacement of this key personnel, it occurred again in two companies. This made compilation of records doubly difficult. It was necessary to prepare rosters of all companies to enable acting First Sergeants to familiarize themselves with the strength of the companies, the members' names, and to give them an opportunity to clarify their records during periods when all information was lost. After participation in the operations for only fifteen days the battalion had received over two hundred and fifty replacements, a portion which were joined during times of heavy fire and darkness, which further confused the issue.

5. A report of total casualties occurring during the operation appear below:

	TOTAL KIA AND LON	TOTAL SK Evac	TOTAL WIA Evac	TOTAL Casualties
OFFICERS	10	1	27	38
ENLISTED	216	92	603	911
GRAND TOTAL	226	93	630	949

b) Bn Surgeon Report

1. The medical section, consisting of 2 medical officers, 39 corpsmen, 11 Marine litter bearers, and 1 Marine and 13 corpsmen from "A" Medical Company as a collecting section, landed on Red Beach #2 at 1630 on 19 February 1945. 25 of the 39 corpsmen landed as company aid men with their respective units. The remainder of the medical section composed the Bn Aid Section. At 1700 on the beach, the aid station was in operation, and five casualties from the 27th Marines were collected, treated, and evacuated to the shore party medical section. The aid station was in continuous operation thereafter until 1000 25 March 1945 when it was secured for embarkation.

2. The method of moving the aid station was for 1 medical officer, the aid station corpsmen, and all idle litter bearers to move with the forward echelon of the Bn CP and establish themselves in a new site. During this time, the other medical officer, the collecting detachment of "A" Medical Company, and any litter bearers who were out collecting casualties maintained an active aid station at the original site. This group would then move with the rear echelon of the Bn CP.

3. The aid station was always established in a defiladed area near and within the defense zone of the Bn CP. The closest the aid station ever was to the front lines was 250 yards; the furthest distance 900 yards. The average distance to the front lines was 400 to 600 yards.

4. Evacuation from the front lines to the aid station was accomplished by a 4 man litter team. Occasionally it was possible to send ambulances and "recon" trucks forward to a point in defilade nearer the lines from which the litter teams could operate. Evacuation to the shore party medical section was accomplished by jeep ambulances and amphibious tractors. In the later phases when the division hospital was set up, "recon" trucks replaced the amphibious tractors as supplementary transportation. These trucks were obtained on call from the Regimental Motor Pool at such times as heavy casualties were encountered.

5. From the beginning the 11 Marine litter bearers proved inadequate for evacuation from the front lines. In the first 12 days of the operation, additional litter squads were provided by corpsmen from the aid station, Marines from HqCo, and from the mortar platoons of the rifle companies. From D plus 12 until withdrawal from the lines on D plus 25, additional litter teams were drawn from the replacements assigned to the Battalion.

6. The work of the aid station was primarily that of first aid; control of hemorrhage, dressing of wounds, and treatment of shock. Only occasionally was operative work done and then of a simple nature such as suturing a sucking chest wound or removal of shrapnel from minor wounds. Only 2 amputations were done during the entire operation.

7. The total number of cases handled during the operation was 922 distributed as follows:

Annex QUEEN, Appendix 4 (LT 2-26 Report, Staff Section)

Died of wounds in the aid station	24
Sick Treated and Returned to duty	43
Wounded treated and returned to duty	57
Sick Treated and Evacuated	74
(Combat Fatigue 46 Illnesses 28)	
Wounded treated and Evacuated	724
(Stretcher cases 527 Walking wounded 197)	

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It will be noted that more wounded were evacuated through the aid station than the Bn itself experienced. The present official figure is 633. Some of the wounded died in rear areas, which fact would account for a certain discrepancy in figures. The chief reason for the discrepancy, however, is care of wounded from other organizations. The most striking example of this occurred on 3 March 1945, peak day for the aid station, when a total of 162 cases were logged. 55 of them were from other organizations.

8. Casualties in the medical section were sufficiently heavy that replacements had to be drawn several times through the Regimental Aid Station, Replacements Drafts, and from 5th Motor Transport, and from Co "A" 5th Medical Battalion. The total number of replacements was 17. Casualties in the medical section were distributed as follows:

39 original corpsmen of the Bn	
Killed and Died of wounds	6
Wounded and Evacuated	8
Sick and Evacuated	8
(Combat Fatigue 3 Other illnesses 5)	
11 Marine Litter Bearers	
Killed and Died of Wounds	1
Wounded and evacuated	8
Sick and evacuated	2
14 Men of "A" MedCo Collecting Section	
Wounded and evacuated	3
17 Replacement Corpsmen	
Killed and Died of Wounds	2
Wounded and evacuated	8

Of the variable number of men acting as additional litter bearers, 2 are known to have been killed in action. No other casualties occurred in this group.

9. Sufficient medical supplies and equipment were carried ashore by hand and in 2 jeep ambulances to last through the first 5 days of the operation with the exception of blankets and litters. Replacements for these were drawn as early as D plus 1 from the Shore Party Medical Section. After the 5th day, supplies were drawn as needed from the Regimental Aid Station, the Division Hospital, and from our own reserves carried in Maveety drums by the Bn QM. At no time was there a failure of medical supply.

10. On landing, both jeep ambulances became bogged down on the beach and were not in service until noon of D plus 1. Evacuation during this period was accomplished by hand carry and amphibious tractors.

### B. Intelligence

1. Throughout the operation enemy information was relayed to all units. The Bn rec'd reports from other units over the intelligence radio net. Close liaison was maintained with the line companies by means of the intelligence men attached to each company. These men were one of the most reliable means of actual front line enemy information.

2. The enemy situation, as a whole, can be summed up as the application of a very effective, systematic plan of defense that took every advantage of terrain. The enemy held the ground at all costs, taking cover in caves and pillboxes when under heavy fire.

3. Maps issued before the operation to this Bn were 20 copies of 1:20,000, 30 copies of 1:10,000, and 24 copies of 1:5,000. This was an adequate supply for the operation, and no further issue was needed at any time during the campaign. In addition, this Bn was supplied with a plaster relief map, which was used frequently for briefing purposes aboard ship. An adequate supply of the G-2 enemy situation map of 1:10,000 was also received. This map contained enemy installations. Each intelligence man in the rifle companies carried a copy of this map for the Co Commander, and it was used very effectively for reference to enemy positions. With this map on hand it was unnecessary to have enemy symbols on the operations map.

4. The aerial photograph coverage supplied to this organization was complete. The stereoscope strips were used aboard ship to augment the terrain detail of the maps. The stereoscope proved very efficient. The most useful photo during the operations were those with the white symbols of enemy positions superimposed on the surface. They cleared up terrain detail where the map failed.

5. Vectographs were used frequently in briefing. This was the first time the battalion had the opportunity to work with them. During the operation they were not used because the bulk of the vectographs were misplaced during the landing.

6. Hydrographic information supplied to this organization was adequate and found to be of good caliber. The intelligence information, received from G-2 was a resume of the previous days operation in the form of a periodic report. The material in this report was considered sufficient, and served as a

good review of the enemy situation. However, the G-2 report by itself would not have been an adequate picture of the enemy's recent activity. This is where the Division Radio Intelligence Net became so effective and valuable. This organization received many "flash" reports on enemy activity almost as soon as it occurred, whereupon the Bn immediately disseminated this information to the companies. It was through this Intelligence net that the 2dBn was best able to keep abreast of the complete enemy situation.

7. This organization took only one prisoner during the campaign; the system provided for the handling of prisoners and interrogating same was found to be adequate. There were no civilians encountered in the Bn's zone of action.

8. A great wealth of enemy documents and material was captured by this organization. The most outstanding was the new Japanese weapon, the Spigot Mortar. While Bn could send back small quantities of documents and material to the Reg't CP by runner, difficulty was encountered in getting large quantities back.

9. There were no JICPOA teams observed in this Bn's zone of action. The two liaison men from Reg't fulfilled their duties in a competent manner. One man is sufficient for the work to be done. These men were used to take to Reg't small quantities of documents and gear. On their return from Reg't they usually brought back an overlay showing any changes in the enemy situation. The S-2 liaison men to companies were exceptionally valuable, and left little to be desired. They were the source of much front line information, not only of the enemy but of our own troops. Each man within the company handled the Co map, and served as a receiving station for the documents and material of the enemy found by personnel of the company.

10. Enemy tactics in the Bn zone of action did not follow the usual Japanese plan of defense. The enemy did not attempt a large scale "Banzai" attack as was anticipated, although there were some small infiltration attempts made. The enemy followed a very sound defense plan in this campaign. He simply "holed up", and made advance as difficult as possible. The defense tactics were effective. He wasted little front line infantry in the early days of the campaign, depending upon his supporting weapons. Infantry positions would be replenished and reinforced at night.

11. Japanese artillery was found to be greatly improved, and the enemy mortars were as effective as ever. The enemy has not yet learned the science of barrage artillery fire, as each gun was fired individually. His airbursts were usually too high to be effective. His heavy flat trajectory weapons such as the 37MM and 47MM AT guns were registered along avenues of approach. These weapons were very effective against tanks and vehicles, and were supplemented by many minefields.

12. The individual Japanese soldier was well equipped. In one instance an individual fox-hole periscope was found. It is apparent that many Japs had these, because of the fact that the enemy was so well concealed in the Bn zone of advance. He used explosive bullets. Many snipers were concealed within the Bn zone of action, and they were very effective. The enemy would put on Marine clothing and walk nonchalantly through the area at night. His marksmanship has improved tremendously. He used many spider traps. All in all the enemy is a greatly improved fighter, and is adapting a more sound policy of fighting to substitute for the reckless and wasteful "Banzai" type of defense.

### C. Operations

1. The 2d Bn landed on Red Beach #2 at 1630, 19Feb45, under the assumption that the beach would be secure, but nevertheless tactically prepared to meet any emergency. "D" & "E" Co's landed in the 1st and 2d waves, with Co "F" in the 3d wave. The beach was secure in that this organization did not have to fight its way inland. However, heavy sniper, artillery, and mortar fire was received.

2. The 2dBn was engaged in front line activity during the following periods, making advances as indicated: a) 22Feb45 to 26Feb45 inclusive 750 yards, b) 2Mar45 to 5Mar45 inclusive 700 yards, c) 9Mar45 to 15Mar45 inclusive, 1000 yards. In addition to the above, the Battalion engaged in "mopping up" action on 19Mar45 and 24Mar45 in target squares 235 and 251 directly behind the front lines.

3. This organization was under 26th Marines control throughout the campaign with the following exceptions. a) Committed to Division Reserve at 0800 27Feb45 and remained in this capacity until 0945 28Feb45, when orders were received to convert to 27th Marines control. b) From 0945 27Feb45 to 0800 1Mar45, remained in 27th Marines control. c) From 1900 10Mar45 to 1700 13Mar45 inclusive again under 27th Marines control. This conversion was made during a period of front line activity. d) From 0800 7Mar45 to 1800 8Mar45 inclusive Bn was in Corps Reserve. At 2130 rec'd written Corps Operations order to be prepared to fill in gaps or reinforce the front lines anywhere along the Corps front. At the end of the period the Bn reverted to 26th Marines control.

4. The operations orders rec'd by this organization were, with two exceptions verbal or telephonic. A written order was rec'd from Corps Hq on 7Mar45, and a Regt'l order accompanied by an overlay dated 23Mar45, giving instructions to be followed in mopping up the area assigned to this organization. On several occasions orders were delivered to this organization by liaison officer. Orders, through the medium of the telephone, were usually received at about 2100 on the night before execution.

5. This Bn submitted at 1600 daily a written periodic report accompanied by an overlay, showing the operation for the past 24 hours. Report was not submitted when the Bn was in reserve or a static situation.

6. Throughout the campaign this Bn rec'd normal operational support, including engineers (1 platoon attached), 37MM AT plt, artillery support, naval gunfire support, and air support. These were used to perform their normal functions with a few exceptions, where in times of emergency engineers and 37mm personnel were used to fill gaps for night defense along the Bn front. In addition to this support, Tanks, "Half tracks" from Regimental Weapons Company and rockets were on call from Regiment. These latter 3 agencies of support were used on many occasions throughout the campaign, especially the tanks and rockets.

7. Initially it was found that the Engineer Platoon could better aid the operational efficiency of this organization by operating in the rear of the Bn area. They were so used until the supply problem from the beach to the Battalion was under control. On many occasions their tractors were used to haul sleds of supplies from the beach to the Bn dump. Their bulldozer was used to dig out ammunition dugouts, to improve existing roads and construct new roads to the Bn forward area. Engineer personnel cleared the Bn dump area and at night were used as protection for the Bn Aid Station. They were first used in the forward area about 25Feb45 to mark a minefield, and finally to clear a path through it so that tanks could move up and support the infantry attack. During the Bn's 2d period of front line activity, the Engineers cleared of mines the road running north and south in TA217. In this area and TA 234 the Bn encountered many minefield defenses. During the Bn's first two periods in the front lines the engineer platoon remained intact under Bn control, and was sent wherever needed within the Bn zone of action. During the 3d period, 1 squad was attached to each assault Company and the remaining squad remained under Bn control. It was during this period that the engineers did their most effective work. Their armored bulldozer, (TD18) was used constantly building roads to the assault companies' forward positions, so that tanks could support the attack. Engineers blew up caves behind the assault units, securing the ground behind the Co's. The utilization of engineers reached its peak in the northern part of the island where the terrain was characterized by many rock formations and caves.

8. The 37MM AT Platoon was never used in the attack. It was used to augment the defense, while in a reserve position, along avenues of approach. Occasionally the 37MM Platoon was used in front line positions. This occurred during the Battalion's first period of front line duty. In the 2d & 3d periods terrain in many instances made it impossible to use them in forward areas. 37MM personnel were used many times during these periods to fill gaps in the line for night defense.

Annex QUEEN, appendix 4 ( LT 2-26 Report, Staff Section)

9. The battalion used its artillery support at all opportune times. Company Commanders and forward observers worked together in figuring out supporting fire missions before the infantry attacked. Normal and emergency barrages were decided upon and fired "in", under observation of Company Commanders and forward observers, prior to darkness. Harrassing night fire was worked out by the Artillery Liaison Officer and the Battalion Operations Officer. Four or five likely areas of enemy activity during the night were selected as targets for the harrassing fire. Targets selected were usually road junctions and draws or areas where enemy activity had been reported during the day.

10. Naval gunfire support was obtained through a naval gunfire liaison officer and party at the Bn CP and a naval gunfire observer and party at an OP. Naval gunfire was not used much for close support. It was used to a great extent as a deep supporting weapon, projectiles falling 600 yards beyond front line troops. Naval gunfire fired harassing fire during the night, and was used every night for night illumination. Amount of illumination depended upon supply of shells, and later in the operation 1 ship illuminated for 2 or 3 Bn's. Usual illumination was 1 round every 12 minutes in Bn front. Naval gunfire was used twice at night during operation on targets of opportunity.

11. Air support was represented by an air liaison officer and party at the Bn CP. Aircraft was never used for close support during the operation, but used constantly as a deep supporting weapon.

12. Tanks were used extensively by this organization in support of infantry attacks. Whenever the infantry was held up by enemy strong points of resistance, such as caves and pillboxes, tanks were called to assist the advance. In this capacity flame-thrower tanks were extremely effective. During the 3d period tanks were used continuously to support the infantry attack. Knowing tanks could definitely be used the following day, Bn would request a platoon of tanks the night before. Tanks would be at the Bn CP the following morning about 0700. Guides from the companies would take them up into position. This Bn had a platoon of tanks supporting its attacks from 12Mar<sup>45</sup> to 15Mar<sup>45</sup> inclusive.

13. Half-tracks were first requested by this Bn on 27Feb<sup>45</sup> for the mission of firing on Kama Rock and Kangosu Rock. During the 3d period "half-tracks" were used in conjunction with tanks to support the infantry attack. A "half-track" would replace a tank that returned for ammunition and vice versa, resulting in continuous fire support for the infantry.

14. Rockets were used for support, firing 400 yards to front of troops, and used many times as a signal to attack. This organization used them several times during the campaign to "cover" the companies while "tying in" for the night defense. Bn was able to depend upon the rockets as an additional emergency supporting weapon in its night defense plan. Rockets were fired once in this capacity, and were on call on several occasions.



## D. Logistics and Supply

## a) S-4 Report

1. Troops of LT 2-26 landed on 19Feb45 carrying field marching packs, generally one unit of fire for all weapons, 1 K ration, 1/3 D ration, 1 assault ration and two canteens of water. Each landing craft carried ten gallons of water in cans to insure each man having two canteens upon hitting the beach, in the event a long period of time was spent in the boats. The above ammunition, water, and rations were considered sufficient to last for the first twenty-four hours, at the end of which time resupply was anticipated. Due to the tactical employment of LT 2-26, it was not necessary to issue ammunition ashore until D plus 2, K rations on D plus 2 and water on D plus 1.

2. CT-26 established a dump site on D plus 2, and LT's were notified that a portion of this dump would be set aside for each LT's organizational equipment. However, none of this equipment had been received prior to the commitment of the battalion on D plus 2. Some water, ammunition, and rations were available at the CT dump during this period, but for the most part supplies were moved to this organization directly from the beach. Resupply not being a problem for LT 2-26 until D plus 2, no LT dump was established prior to that time. With the exception of heavy machine guns, no high priority equipment was received during this period.

3. The tractors of the attached engineers were used on the beach until D plus 2 to assist LVT's and DUKW's in moving supplies from the beach to higher echelon dumps. During this period LT 2-26 had little or no use of organizational supply vehicles. By D plus 3 all these vehicles had been accounted for, except a 1-ton truck, but had in the cases of two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trailers been stripped of combat loads. One  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck was damaged but was repairable. Until D plus 2 all supply personnel, equipped with an SCR 300 radio, with the exception of S-4 and one corporal remained at the beach to be on the lookout for organizational equipment (especially high-priority items) coming ashore. On D plus 2 they were stationed at the CT dump.

4. Bn cooks were used in quartermaster work to haul 81MM Mortar ammunition, to guard dumps, and as guides to the front lines.

5. At 1600 on D plus 2 an LT forward dump was established about 50 yards in rear of the Bn CP. By D plus 3 a fairly well-stocked LT dump with facilities for serving flame throwers had been established 50 yards east of the CP. The battalion attacked that morning, and the troops left their haversacks and rolls in the dump, carrying only the poncho. Rainfall was heavy and almost all supplies were brought up by LVT's and tractors and sleds.

6. A request was made for weasels to be used to bring supplies to front lines, but were not available at this time. The guides left at the CT dump were working and to good advantage, but supply from CT was not as yet operating smoothly. The CP was displaced again around noon and the rifle companies took up positions too far forward to be supplied from this point. It was necessary to establish a forward DP about 350 yards forward, 50 yards in rear of the new CP. The early movement of supplies to this position had to be by hand-carry. Later it was possible to get a few LVT loads through (direct from regiment) and the attached Weapons Company one-ton trucks were used to good advantage. Carrying parties forward of the forward DP were furnished in most part by the companies. Troops received all essential supplies, however. There was a high percentage of malfunctioning weapons reported by troops in the line, one company stating that their machine guns were all that were operating efficiently. CT could not supply replacement weapons that day. The overflow of casualties was taken care of by LVT's and one-ton trucks of Weapons Company.

7. On D plus 4 the LT dump and forward DP were combined at about 1200. It was necessary to establish another forward DP about 200 yards north. For the first time the DP was forward of the CP by 150 yards. Supplies were carried to the rifle companies by cooks, engineers, and details from the companies. Troops were resupplied before dark. Roads to the main dump were improved by the engineers. There was no further displacement of supply points until D plus 9 (28Feb45). Hot coffee was prepared at LT dump and carried forward for the first time on D plus 5. All organizational equipment located and not actually needed was placed in Battalion Sections of CT dump, with the four cook guides, and two carpenters detached to guard it.

8. The CP was displaced on D plus 9 and a forward DP established in much the same manner as before about 100 yards in rear. The SCR-300 was effectively used in all these movements. Supply forward was by hand-carry and jeep and trailer.

9. On the morning of D plus 10 the Battalion was ordered to the rear for a day of rest, and supply was carried on from the main dump. "Ten-in-line" rations were issued for the first time, along with fruit juices. One pair of socks per man was issued.

10. A change of orders having been received, the Battalion moved up again the afternoon of D plus 10. The troops were resupplied again before departing, it being necessary to reissue rations (K). Due to the late hour of movement only a skeleton forward DP could be established. It proved adequate however, and was run by a QM corporal. For the first time a telephone was run from the CP to the DP, and this proved to be valuable in speeding up supply, in conjunction with the SCR 300 already being used in the rear dump. On this occasion HMG's were rushed up before dark, but were not used, as had been the case on almost all previous nights.

11. Early on D plus 11 the DP was ordered to select a DP site forward. The point selected was at 199D, near the CP of LT 3-36. The previous method of movement was used and displacement was made quickly. The location proved to be the final site of the main dump, and was used for that purpose during the remainder of the operation. The CP was displaced twice on D plus 11, and due to the lateness of the second movement very few supplies could be moved to a forward DP before nightfall. Resupply was chiefly from a dump left by the organization relieved. For the first time hand-carry after dark was necessary.

12. Several days prior, a one-ton truck had been allocated to the 81MM Mortar Platoon for its exclusive use in transporting ammunition. At this time the TCS jeep (useful only as a carrier, the radio having been damaged and removed) was turned over to the Comm Platoon for their exclusive use. These two arrangements proved quite satisfactory. It is estimated that the 81MM Platoon fired 8000 rounds during the operation.

13. Early on D plus 12 the forward DP was displaced about 150 yards forward of the CP, and all essential supplies were moved to this point. Supply Sgt Cresci was moved up from the rear dump to supervise distribution. Two weasels were finally obtained and supply began to function smoothly. The weasels aided materially in cutting down on carrying parties.

14. On D plus 15 Bn reverted to regimental control and all supplies were carried back to rear dump site at 199D. A cooked hot meal was served in the evening. Extra water was issued so that the men could wash.

15. On D plus 17 the Bn moved up at 0500. Column was followed by two weasels, and one 1-ton truck loaded with demolitions, grenades, and flame-thrower servicing equipment. DP was established about 200 yards forward of CP. Supply was normal. From 10Mar45 to 16Mar45 supply functioned normally. A shortage of 60MM mortar illuminating ammunition was keenly felt around 13Mar45, when the Navy could not furnish adequate illumination. It was necessary to have one company's 60MM Mortar Platoon illuminate the whole battalion front on two nights. Illuminating hand grenades were used to augment the illumination furnished by the Co's but this did not prove entirely satisfactory. One pair of socks per man in the rifle companies was issued during this period. The battalion was relieved at the front on 16 March, 1945, and moved to rear assembly area at 199D. Hot meals were resumed, and a clothing issue was held. Supply in bivouac area was normal for remainder of operation.

b) TQM report.

1. Unloading of assault vehicles began at 0800 on 19Feb45. After LCVP's and LCM's were loaded they rendezvoused until 1100 when called along side to disembark troops. Boats began returning to the ship after carrying troops to the beach at about 1600. No other unloading was effected on this date. At 0730 on 20Feb45 the unloading of high priority supplies was begun. These consisted of flame-thrower gear, heavy machine guns, sand bags and engineer tools.

At 1300 an order was received from the flagship not to send any more boats to beach. Boats began returning to ship at approximately 1500, and were immediately taken aboard. Orders received from the control boat were not to send any gear to the beach unless called for. At 1100 on 21Feb45 a request was received from the beach. The ship would not dispatch any boats until orders were approved by the flagship. Approval was given at about 1500 by the flagship, and one LCM was dispatched to beach. At 0800 on 22 Feb45 the LCM dispatched the previous day returned to the ship. The Beachmaster would not accept cargo. Orders were received from the control boat to commence unloading ammunition into LCM's only. Approximately six hours were spent in an attempt to obtain permission from the flagship to unload ammunition, and finally one LCM was dispatched with a load of ammunition. The unloading of ammunition into the one LSM continued during the 23rd and 24th day of February. On 25Feb45 another LSM was received for general unloading. The remainder of the ammunition, high priority organizational gear, and high priority vehicles were unloaded.

2. On 27Feb45 one LST was received to complete unloading. All personnel left ship and boarded LST at approximately 1630. About 2 lifts of gear belonging to the 31st CB Bn was left aboard. Since the ship had received orders to get under way at 1630, time did not permit unloading of remaining gear. Commenced unloading of LST at 1930. Unloading was completed at 1630, 23Feb45.

#### E. Signal Communication

1. Communications personnel carried ashore with them on D-day enough equipment to establish immediate Battalion signal communication. Supply was adequate throughout the operation.

2. Relatively short range operation permitted maximum use of portable sets. Ground occupied by LT 2-26 in initial stages of operation rendered impractical the use of radio vehicles. The TCS jeep later proved invaluable in bringing up supplies from Reg't and aiding in forward displacements.

3. The Regimental Command Net "A" (TBX) was established for a period of 24 hours during 19-20Feb45, then was never opened again. Regimental Command nets "B" (SCR-610) and "C" (SCR-300) proved sufficient.

4. On 21Feb45 a sniper singled Lt. White out of a large group of men and shot him. Lt. White was carrying an SCR-610. On 23Feb45 the Japs spotted the long antenna of an SCR-300 operating with Company "F" and fired a flat trajectory gun at it until they succeeded in demolishing the radio and injuring the operator. During the operation it was definitely seen that an antenna or radio must be well concealed if it is not to draw severe enemy fire.

5. On 14 March 1945 word was received from Reg't that the Reg't Command Net "E" had been compromised. On 15Mar45 a voice with heavy Japanese accent transmitted on this net the following message, "Radio Tokyo, this is  
Reg't 21AnnexQUEEN, Appendix 4 ( LT-2-26 Report, Staff Section)

Iwo Jima. So sorry, must go now". This was immediately reported to Reg't. Reg't did not hear the transmission and was never able to determine from where it originated. That was the only unauthorized transmission heard on this net.

6. Several times difficulty was encountered due to the fact that so many SCR-536's were operating on the same frequency. This was most serious on D-day. Later in the operation, Lt Aubrey of the 81MM Mortar section, received serious interference from an adjacent battalion. This interference delayed the firing of the 81MM Mortars considerably on this occasion.

7. Companies had no occasion to use signal pyrotechnics. Other than the use of front line markers, there was no ground-to-air panel communications.

8. From D-day through 16Mar45 the wire section laid twenty-seven miles of W-114. On 22 February 1945 there were thirty-seven lines laid to the companies. It was impossible to trouble shoot the old lines because of enemy mortar and sniper fire.

9. On 21Feb45 the Bn displaced forward in one "jump"-not by echelon. At this time it was impossible to maintain wire communication to the rear. The same thing happened on 22Feb45. These were the only instances where wire communication was not constant.

10. The damage done to wire by enemy shell fire and vehicles in the initial phases of the operation caused wire maintenance to be a major problem.

PART V  
COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Personnel Administration

(a) S-1 Report

Comment

During the early phases of an operation the identity and classification of casualties is difficult if not impossible. Those persons responsible for the data are either preoccupied with more essential matters, or have been unable to obtain the required information because of the tactical situation, or have become casualties themselves.

Recommendation

That during the earlier phases of an operation the only casualty reports required be tactical ( by number ), and that administrative details be submitted much later.

Comment

The required form of the S-1 report was changed after the operation had begun, resulting in duplication of effort.

Recommendation

That the subject matter and method of compiling reports be standardized and adhered to prior to "D" Day.

Comments

On 1 March 1945, ninety-nine enlisted replacements reported to this Battalion immediately after the organization had moved to a new assembly area, during hours of darkness, and with X-hour the next morning set at 0800. The roster accompanying the replacements was not typed, but hand-written on several sheets of paper.

Recommendations

That replacements be sent only when an organization will have a full day for assigning and indoctrinating them, and only when the organization is in reserve.

Comments

The personnel section of this Battalion operated initially at the forward C.P., and consisted of a personnel sergeant and one clerk. Its work was interrupted by enemy fire and lack of facilities, and it inevitably became concerned with the tactical situation.

Recommendation

That at least five personnel clerks be maintained in the personnel section during combat, and that the personnel section operate in rear areas.

Comment

The "blackout tent" of this Battalion was lost in the landing, and the personnel section could do no work at night.

Recommendation

Again, that administrative reports be kept to a minimum during the early phases of an operation as difficult and as severe in casualties as the one of Iwo Jima.

b) Medical Report

Comment

The provision of 11 marine litter bearers for evacuation was inadequate, and it was necessary to draw personnel from rifle companies for this function.

Recommendation

That a minimum of 24 men and 1 NCO be detached as a litter-bearing section, and preferably 32 men and 1 NCO.

Comment

A total of 17 replacement corpsmen were received by this Battalion. They were excellently trained in first aid, and poorly trained in field tactics. Of 39 original corpsmen, only 14 were killed or wounded. Of 17 replacement casualties, 10 were killed or wounded in a much shorter period of time and under less fire than the original group.

Recommendation

That all corpsmen, replacement or otherwise, be given prolonged periods of field training with rifle companies.

Comment

It was necessary to load and unload medical supplies on the jeep ambulance each time the aid station was moved.

Recommendation

That a trailer be provided for jeep ambulance to expedite movement of the aid station and to prevent damage of medical supplies.

Comment

On each of the rehearsals, as many as 30% of the men in small boats became sea sick. Had the conditions of the sea on "D" Day been such as to have the same effect, the landing would have been considerably more difficult.

Recommendation

That a motion sickness remedy such as a combination of amytal and hyoscine be provided for all amphibious operations.

B Intelligence Report

Comment

The map used was inaccurate and insufficient in detail.

Recommendation

That more accurate maps be provided. In the event a map is found to be inaccurate, leaders should not hesitate to use it very little (probably only to approximate a position for the purpose of making an overlay). There is no function, including firing artillery, that cannot be effectively and safely done by observation of the actual ground. Leaders should be trained to operate by observation of the ground, and be taught to depend very little on a map.

Comment

The enlisted linguist lacked self confidence when brought forward to induce Japanese to come out of caves. It is believed this lack of confidence was due to insufficient field training.

Recommendation

More field training for linguists.

Comment

Personnel cooperated excellently in "turning in" captured documents and materiel. This is attributed to the stress placed on the proper handling of captured documents in combat during training by the S-2.

Recommendation

Continue such indoctrination during training.

Comment

Propaganda spread to the enemy had little effect. One prisoner was captured. There was evidence that he had read the surrender leaflets in that he had nothing but a fundoshi on.

Recommendation

None.

Comment

The intelligence personnel attached to the rifle companies did excellent work, directed work connected with intelligence, and were invaluable aids to company commanders. They were handicapped by insufficient rank.

Recommendation

That intelligence personnel attached to companies be given the rank of sergeant to make the prestige of the position commensurate with the duties and responsibilities.

Comment

Two command post exercises were held long before "D" Day in which a map of Iwo Jima was used. The name "Iwo Jima" was not on the map, but the peculiar shape of the island caused its identity to be revealed to all personnel who participated in the CFX when, several days later, the "Honolulu Advertiser" published an aerial photograph of Iwo Jima.

Recommendation

That closer security measures be taken.

Comment

The inaccuracy of the map resulted in little knowledge of terrain to the front and dispute as to front line locations.

Recommendation

That low altitude aerial photographs of a battalion front be taken and delivered on call.

Comment

Personnel of this Battalion had little training with vectographs prior to D Day.

Recommendation

That vectographs be made available in training.



C.) Operations

Comment

The air-liaison party attached to this Battalion did not maintain a forward O.P., and therefore no close-support air missions were flown. Rifle company personnel are too preoccupied to observe air strikes.

Recommendation

That a forward O.P. be maintained by air-liaison parties.

Comments

On this operation tanks were the most effective supporting weapon. Flame thrower tanks were especially effective. The most satisfactory method of directing tank fire was that of having a guide inside the tank. Too much time was taken for refueling tanks.

Recommendations

That more tanks be made available in training, and systems for the direction of their fire be experimented with. Also that the refueling station for tanks be located much closer to the front lines than they were during this operation.

Comments

Artillery forward observers often lost contact with rifle company commanders. Sometimes they withdrew with the battalion being relieved on the front lines during a passage of lines. They frequently complained of their cumbersome communications equipment. Forward Observer-casualties were high, probably due to some extent to insufficient infantry training.

Recommendations

That artillery forward observers receive more training with infantry units to alleviate these difficulties. Also that the possibility of furnishing F.O's. with lighter communication equipment be investigated, and that F.O's. be given more specific instructions concerning their remaining on duty or being relieved during a passage of lines.

Comments

The work of engineer personnel was generally excellent. However, they were not prepared to demolish caves and pillboxes on the front lines, performing this duty only after friendly infantry had by-passed the enemy positions. They were very often needed in assault for this purpose, especially when the assault squads had received heavy casualties. The work of engineer personnel in the construction of roads with an armored bulldozer was invaluable.

Recommendations

That the armored bulldozer be more heavily armored and equipped with a radio for communication with infantry commanders. Also that engineer personnel be trained to perform assault functions.

Comment

Illumination at night by 60mm Mortars was an added burden for company commanders, necessitated coordination between companies, and presented a supply problem.

Recommendation

That an illumination shell be developed for the 81mm Mortar.

Comment

Replacement personnel were not trained in assault squad functions, and even poorly trained as infantrymen. Casualties were high among them.

Recommendation

That Replacement Battalions be attached to a division and undergo the same training as all other infantrymen in the division.

Comment

The actual effect rockets had on the enemy could at no time be observed. However, the sound they made on impact, and the knowledge that, due to their excellent mobility, they were available for support on short notice had a favorable effect on the morale and confidence of the troops.

Recommendation

That rockets be retained and used again for further evaluation.

Comment

81mm white phosphorous shells were used effectively to cover the evacuation of wounded. Their casualty effect on enemy troops was not observed.

Recommendation

None.

Comment

The term "snipers" may have been over-used on this operation. However, the enemy did definitely and effectively employ excellent marksmen at long ranges to single out key personnel as targets. Using marines as snipers against enemy snipers was effective.

Recommendation

That some personnel in the infantry battalion be armed with the United States Rifle, .30 calibre, Model 1903, and a telescopic sight, and be used exclusively as snipers.

Comment

War dogs were used once during the operation at listening posts at night. They were ineffective.

Recommendation

That the use of war dogs be discontinued.

D. Supply

a) S-4 Report

Comment

On D plus 2, 60% to 70% of all weapons except light machine guns were rendered inoperative by rain and sand. The Carbine was most unsatisfactory in this respect throughout the operation. One company requested 36 M-1 Rifles and turned in the same number of Carbines. Dependence upon salvage to replace malfunctioning weapons was not satisfactory. Shortly before embarkation, a new type flame thrower and rocket launcher were issued, and personnel had no opportunity to become completely indoctrinated in them before sailing.

Recommendation

That the Carbine be replaced by the M-1 Rifle, and that higher echelons carry a resupply of weapons to be made available when needed. Also that weapons of more recent model be made available prior to an operation in order to allow time for familiarization with them.

Comments

The 81mm White Phosphorous shells used on this operation frequently fell "short". The new metal boxes for mortar ammunition were found to be heavy and therefore difficult to carry. There was a scarcity of 81mm Mortar ammunition. Favorable comment was expressed regarding the packaging of .30 caliber machine gun ammunition.

Recommendation

That ammunition be more thoroughly inspected prior to embarkation. Also that more careful study of the amount of ammunition carried in an operation be made so that there is no scarcity should the operation last longer than anticipated.

Comments

The new "C" and "10-in-1" rations were well-liked by the troops, and the improved "K" was considered superior to the old type. The new "C" was considered the best all-purpose ration. The preparation of "B" ration was a good morale factor. The supply of PX rations was sufficient in quantity and well-handled. Personnel were well-pleased with the supply of bakery products.

Recommendations

That battalions be permitted to carry at least three day's rations of various types so that mixed issues may be made. This will also aid supply when troops are suddenly ordered to the front after having been issued "10-in-1" rations in a rear assembly area. Also that a quota supply of "hot-box" heaters be carried, and the preparation of "B" ration be continued in combat. Also that fruit juices be made available in individual containers, and that water be delivered in 5 gallon cans to battalions and not in drums which require transferral to 5 gallon cans.

Comments

Difficulty was encountered in landing knapsacks as no containers were provided for them. Upon reembarkation, no lumber was available for crating.

Recommendations

That containers be provided for knapsacks when they are not brought ashore on individuals. Also that sufficient "knockdown" boxes or lumber be carried to allow crating for reembarkation. These would also be helpful for packing personal effects of casualties.

Comments

The poncho was inadequate protection against rain and cold, and hampered movements such as throwing grenades and firing weapons.

Recommendation

That the poncho be replaced by a hooded jacket similar to the Navy "foul weather" type.

Comment

After D plus 3 transportation was adequate due to the use of the vehicles of attached units. The "weasel" was excellent for supply purposes.

Recommendation

That at least two "weasels" be included in the infantry battalion when going into combat, and that the cargo space of this vehicle be enlarged if possible.

Comment

Both in training and during the operation the need for a well-trained supply sergeant in the rifle company was sorely felt.

Recommendation

That the property sergeant of each rifle company be QM personnel.

Comment

An infantry battalion engaged with the enemy cannot possibly engage in salvage work. This is also true of burial and evacuation of dead. The Regimental Chaplain performed this latter duty in an outstanding manner, but was handicapped by lack of personnel. This battalion could not furnish help for these two important functions due to the tactical situation and the high number of casualties.

Recommendation

That higher echelons perform the functions of salvage and evacuation of dead with specially-trained personnel.

Comment

The use of the SCR-300 radio at the Battalion dump, and a telephone from the Battalion C.F. to the forward D.F. were very satisfactory and speeded up supply functions.

Recommendation

That this system be used in future operations.

b) Troop Transport Quartermaster Report

Comments

Unloading of the ship was delayed because the ship would not allow boats to be dispatched to the beach without approval from the Flagship. Coxswains did not carry out orders and contact the control boat before hitting the beach, resulting in the landing of Battalion gear on three different beaches. Numerous boats of high priority gear were rejected at the beach by the beachmaster.

Recommendation

That better coordination and liaison be effected between naval and marine personnel in charge of unloading and landing supplies. If possible, the senior officer on the beach should be a marine, so that more cognizance can be had of the importance of landing such items as flame throwers and sandbags regardless of the difficulties existing for landing boats.

E. Communications

Comments

Wire communications were very satisfactory. The use of a  $\frac{1}{4}$  Ton Truck for hauling signal equipment is essential. Some difficulty was encountered in maintaining lateral wire communications to adjacent battalions.

Recommendation

That all battalions maintain at least half the length of lateral lines in their switchboards.