

AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS :

CAPTURE OF OKINAWA (RYUKYUS OPERATION)

27 MARCH TO 21 JUNE 1945

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This publication "Amphibious Operations—Capture of Okinawa (Ryukyus Operation)—27 March to 21 June 1945" continues the series promulgating timely information drawn from action reports. It follows "Amphibious Operations—Capture of Iwo Jima, CominCh P-0012".

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Chapter I. NARRATIVE

SYNOPSIS OF THE OPERATION

From: Commander, FIFTH Fleet (Officer Commanding RYUKYUS Operation)

On L - 6, the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division began the capture of Kerama Retto. With little opposition and vigorous action on the part of the division, this group of islands was secured on L - 3. On L - 1, Keise Shima was taken and two battalions of 155-mm. guns emplaced.

On L-day and L+1-day, the Second Marine Division executed a feint landing on the south-east coast of Okinawa.

On L-day (1 April 1945), troops of the III Amphibious Corps and the XXIV Corps landed on the western beaches. The landing was made with corps abreast, the III Amphibious Corps consisting of the Sixth Marine Division and the First Marine Division on the left, and the XXIV Corps consisting of the Seventh Infantry Division and the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division on the right. Troops advanced with virtually no opposition and by L+2 the First Marine Division and the Seventh Infantry Division had pushed across the island rapidly to the east coast, securing both Yontan and Kadena airfields. The Sixth Marine Division turned north against little opposition and the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division turned south where increasing opposition was met.

The Sixth Marine Division continued its drive north until strong opposition was met in the mountainous terrain of the Motobu Peninsula. The enemy here amounted to about 1,500 Japs, well dug in. Patrolling continued to secure the northern tip of the island and the eastern portion above the Motobu Peninsula. After several days of hard mountain fighting, the Sixth Marine Division secured the Motobu Peninsula, thus paving the way for the amphibious assault on Ie Shima by the Seventy-seventh Division. The Seventy-seventh Division landed on Ie Shima on 16 April and all organized resistance was overcome by 22 April.

The Second Marine Division was released from the target area on 14 April and returned to Saipan. On 18 May, the Second Marine Division (less Eighth RCT) was released from the Tenth Army reserve to commander in chief, Pacific Ocean areas, control. The Eighty-first Infantry Division was released from area reserve under control of commander in chief, Pacific Ocean areas, on 18 April and transferred to control of commander in chief, Southwest Pacific area, upon arrival in Leyte.

One RCT of the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division made amphibious assaults on the eastern islands controlling the entrances to Nakagusuku Wan on 19 April, while the remainder of the division was landed over the Hagushi beaches and placed on the right flank of the XXIV Corps north of Machinato. The Ninety-sixth and Seventh Divisions had joined facing south and strong enemy resistance was being met all across the island. This opposition proved to be one of the enemy main lines of defense, and it was expected to be strongly fortified and stubbornly defended.

At 1200 (K) on 18 April, the command post of the Tenth Army was opened ashore.

On 19 April, the XXIV Corps launched a coordinated attack along its entire front. This attack was launched with three divisions abreast, the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division on the right, the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division in the center and the Seventh Infantry Division on the left. The attack was preceded by heavy artillery preparations from shore batteries and naval gunfire, as well as coordinated air strikes. Slight progress was made except on the flanks. The enemy was well entrenched and concealed in caves and tunnels along a line extending from the northern tip of Machinato airfield on the west to the northern part of Yonabaru airfield on the east. The enemy had the advantage of good observation throughout the sector and our troops were up against well-prepared positions in extremely rugged terrain. It was apparent that the enemy had elected to defend along this line in depth.

During the period 19 April to 11 May, constant pressure was exerted on the enemy with only slight gains being made at heavy cost to our troops. The Twenty-seventh Division was relieved by the First Marine Division and turned over to the island commander for garrison duty in the northern part of the island and Ie Shima. The Seventy-seventh Division relieved the Ninety-sixth Division. An attack was initiated under command of the Tenth Army on 11 May. Slow progress was made and about 15 May, the Sixth Marine Division was placed on the right of the First Marine Division and corps boundary established which ran generally south dividing the island between the two corps. Constant pressure was maintained upon the enemy with gains being made on the flanks; only slight gains were made in the rugged area of the Shuri hill mass. The Seventh Infantry Division was placed on the extreme left flank of the XXIV Corps sector, thus making a total of five divisions in the line for further drives to the south.

Poor weather hampered ground troop activity from 22 May until the time of relief of the commander, Fifth Fleet, by the commander, Third Fleet, on 27 May. During this period, in spite of poor weather, the two Marine divisions on the right made consistent gains to the south and east and the Seventh Infantry Division on the left flank gained consistently to the south and west in an attempt to encircle Shuri. At the time of relief of the Commander, Fifth Fleet, the defenses of Shuri were beginning to weaken and pressure in the center of the XXIV Corps was greatly reduced.

This operation was well planned and it was executed in the initial stages as planned. The plan estimated strong enemy defense of the western Okinawa beaches and the two airfields (Yontan and Kadena). It was a complete surprise to the attacking forces to discover that the enemy had withdrawn all defenses from this area, the northern half of southern Okinawa, including the two airfields, allowing it to be occupied practically uncontested. Naturally, all attack commands were highly elated with this unexpected situation. The fierce fighting and heavy casualties considered unavoidable in taking this area had not materialized due to the southerly withdrawal of the unpredictable Jap.

From: Commander, Fast Carrier Task Force (CTF 58) (Strategic Striking and Covering Force)

This support took the form of day and night strikes, sweep and search operations against Kyushu, the neutralization of enemy airfields and facilities in Amami Gunto and Minami Daito, the supplying of day and night CAP and close air support to the occupation forces commencing 18 March 1945, and still continuing as this report is written.

It was a trying period, as little, if any, warning was being given by the radars in the force, and at times the first indication of an aircraft approaching was visual sighting by the close screen. The picket destroyers were invaluable with their visual sightings.

Our night fighters were unable to intercept the enemy owing to their radical maneuvers and intelligent use of window.

21 March 1945 was the first known appearance of the Baka. Enemy air opposition was nonexistent and it became increasingly apparent that our initial strike on Kyushu facilities had interfered with enemy air operations to a greater extent than had been hoped for.

The expected all-out effort by the Japanese on both the beaches and the supporting forces finally developed on the 6th of April.

The task force fighter combat air patrols over Okinawa, and fighter sweeps and patrols over the islands to the northward destroyed 249 airborne planes. Our own losses in air combat totaled 2 for one day as against 236 for the enemy.

Altogether the numbers of aircraft launched in the main strike were as follows:

VF.....	180
VB.....	75
VT.....	131
Total.....	386

The enemy battle fleet was sighted in position 30° 34' N., 128° 08' E. approximately 70 miles, 225° from first sighting report. The weather was poor with 8/10 cloud cover at 3,000 feet. The low ceiling and so many aircraft made the attack most difficult to coordinate. Antiaircraft fire was heavy but inaccurate and a large number of both torpedo and bomb hits were claimed on the *Yamato*, the one cruiser and three destroyers by first

two strike groups (58.1 and 58.3 in order). The strike group of TG 58.4 arrived to find the *Yamato* listing appreciably and hit her with many bombs and six torpedoes, five of them on the high side—the *Yamato* blew up. The CL (*Agano* class) which was found dead in the water was hit by approximately four torpedoes and eight 1,000-pound bombs to help her on her way to the bottom. Out of the original force of one BB, one CL, and eight destroyers, the *Yamato*, one CL, and four destroyers were sunk, one destroyer badly damaged (*Terutsuki* class) and one left burning. Two destroyers were apparently not seriously damaged. Our own plane losses were light—4 VB, 3 VT, and 3 VF. Personnel losses were four pilots and eight airmen, the rest being rescued.

From: Commander, Amphibious Forces (CTF 51) (Commander, Joint Expeditionary Forces)

This action report covers phases I and II of the amphibious operations for the capture of Okinawa Gunto by Task Force 51 (Vice Admiral R. K. Turner, USN, commander, Amphibious Forces, United States Pacific Fleet, and commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, USS *Eldorado*, flagship).

The period included in this report dates from 17 February 1945 when the Northern Attack Force commenced its assembly in the Guadalcanal area to 0900 (I) 17 May 1945 when command of Task Force 51 passed to Vice Admiral Hill, Commander Fifth Amphibious Force.

Under phase I the capture of the Kerama Retto, Keise Shima, and the main island of Okinawa south of the Ishikawa Isthmus together with the Eastern Islands was to be executed. Under phase II the capture of Ie Shima and the Motobu Peninsula simultaneously, followed by the capture of the remainder of Okinawa north of the Ishikawa Isthmus was to be effected. It was further foreseen that if during phase I adequate airfields had not been captured at an early date, the capture of Ie Shima might have to take place during the so-called phase I.

Cargo and troops were lifted on the West Coast, Hawaiian Islands, Southwest Pacific, Marshalls, Carolines, and Leyte and the various elements proceeded to assemble at Ulithi, Guadalcanal, Saipan and Leyte. Following a period of logistics and rehearsals the several forces departed for the ob-

jective except the Expeditionary Force Floating Reserve which remained at Ulithi on call and the Expeditionary Troops Area Reserve which stood by at Noumea to await orders to load. Preceding the task force were the minesweepers which arrived at the objective on Love-8-day to insure the safe approach of the advancing units. Following the minesweepers came the Amphibious Support Force and Gunfire and Covering Force which arrived at the objective area on Love-7-day and carried out their missions of surface and air bombardment, minesweeping, underwater demolitions and provided cover at the objective area for the Expeditionary Force. Next to arrive was the Western Island Attack Force as of Love-6-day, when landing of the assault troops commenced for the capture of Kerama Retto and Keise Shima. These islands were secured, a logistics and seaplane base established at Kerama Retto and field artillery landed on Keise Shima by Love-1-day. The northern and southern attack forces arrived on Love-day debarked and landed assault troops over the Hagushi beaches on the west shore of Okinawa. The Demonstration Group having arrived on Love-day concurrently executed a diversionary feint at landing on southwestern Okinawa, repeating this feint on Love+1-day, whereupon this force retired to the rear area after having landed the Army reserve over the Hagushi beaches. The unloading of ships commenced immediately following the debarkation of assault troops. The Expeditionary Force Floating Reserve was called forward and, using one RCT supported by surface craft and air, landed and captured the Eastern Islands on Love+10-day while the remainder of the force was landed over the Hagushi beaches. The Western Island Landing Force embarked at Kerama Retto, proceeded to Ie Shima, landed on Love+15 and captured that island as of Love+20-day. This operation was supported by naval gunfire, air bombardment, and by artillery previously placed on Menha Shima. Following the capture of Ie Shima the force was withdrawn, and landed over the Hagushi beaches. A detachment of garrison troops supported by light surface elements was landed on Tori Shima without opposition where it established an air warning and fighter-director station as of Love+41-day. The area reserve was not called forward to the objective. Ground action in general was characterized

by weak opposition to landings. The enlargement of the beachhead on Okinawa initially was rapid. Movement to the north was relatively fast against scattered resistance resulting in the conclusion of phase II of the operation as of Love+20-day. To the south combat settled down to an attack against fortified positions. Our forces were under constant attack by hostile aircraft from which we suffered casualties to ships and personnel through bombing, torpedo, suicide, and Baka attacks. The excellent performance by our CAP and fine teamwork of our fighter-directors and air warning service, together with ships' gunfire did much to minimize the effect of these attacks. Smoke was used extensively at night with good results. A hostile task force composed of one battleship, one cruiser and eight destroyers which sortied from the Inland Sea passing south of Kyushu into the East China Sea was engaged by planes of Task Force 58 on Love+6-day with only four heavily damaged destroyers escaping total destruction. Suicide boats and other small craft were active but were effectively controlled by illumination and ships' gunfire. Offensive operations were still continuing when at 0900 (I) 17 May 1945 command of TF 51 passed to Vice-Admiral HILL with command of all forces on shore in the Okinawa area to the commanding general, Tenth Army.

From: Commander, FIFTH Amphibious Force (CTF 31 and CTF 51)

The period covered by this report dates from 0900 Item 17 May 1945, at which time commander, Fifth Amphibious Force relieved commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet, as CTF 51, to 1305 (Item) 21 June 1945 when organized resistance ceased and the island of Okinawa was declared secured by commanding general, Tenth Army. At the same time commanding general, Tenth Army, assumed command of the Ryukyus.

A synopsis of the operation may be generalized in the following sequence: In accordance with commander, Fifth Fleet, dispatch order, commander, Fifth Amphibious Force, on board the U. S. S. *Ancon* assumed command of TF 51, relieving commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet. He continued to control air defenses of Okinawa Gunto and of naval forces present and reported to the commanding general, Tenth Army, for that purpose. Support of the Tenth Army by

the Fifth Fleet continued until 28 May 1945 when the Third Fleet relieved the Fifth Fleet. The Third Fleet then continued support of the Tenth Army, and commander, Fifth Amphibious Force, assumed command of TF 31. On 3 June 1945, commander Fifth Amphibious Force, shifted flag and staff to U. S. S. *Auburn*. Offensive operations continued until organized resistance on the island of Okinawa ceased. Outlying islands were occupied in amphibious shore-to-shore operations and without opposition as follows: Kutaka Shima on 20 May, Iheya Shima on 3 June, Aguni Shima on 9 June, and Kume Shima on 26 June 1945.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 4 (CTF 53) (Northern Attack Force)

Phase I.—The task was to land the Northern Landing Force (III Amphibious Corps, reinforced, Major General Geiger, USMC) on designated beaches on the western side of Okinawa, north of the Bisha Gawa, in order to assist in the capture of Okinawa.

The Northern Attack Force was mounted in the Guadalcanal-Purvis Bay-Russell Islands area. From 1 to 3 March 1945 training was conducted with the landing force embarked. Following the rehearsal, ships returned to anchorages for rehabilitation and final logistics. Movement to the objective via Ulithi commenced on 12 March with the departure of the Northern Tractor Flotilla. The remainder of the force, less the Northern Defense and Northern Garrison Groups, left Guadalcanal for Ulithi on 15 March. The few days at Ulithi were spent in providing for logistics needs and in effecting changes and substitutions in the task force organization. Movement and approach to the objective were executed according to schedule.

At dawn on Love-day, 1 April 1945, the fire-support ships (4 OBB, 3 CA, 1 CL, 10 DD) commenced delivering fires schedules by commander, Joint Expeditionary Force (CTF 51). Control of naval gunfire for support of the assault and deep supporting fire in the zones of action of the III Amphibious Corps passed to commander, Northern Attack Force (CTF 53), at H-35 (0755 (I)). Firing of heavy-fire-support ships was closely coordinated with rocket, mortar, and 20-mm. and 40-mm. fire against beach areas by gunfire support craft (6 LCI(G), 16 LCI(M), 18 LCI(R) (RCM) 6 LCM(R) and 12 LCS(L)). After H-hour call

fire, deep support fire and harassing fire were provided. Coordination of naval gunfire was of a high order; troop commanders repeatedly praised the excellence of the support rendered.

Weather and surf conditions for the initial landing were excellent and preparations for landing troops progressed without interruption in spite of repeated air alerts during which 4 enemy planes were shot down in the transport area. Troops in the first wave were landed on beach Blue 1 at 0830 and in the next several minutes first waves hit other beaches in rapid succession. By 0840 all first waves had landed. The scheme of maneuver called for the landing of two divisions abreast: the Sixth Marine Division on the left, the First Marine Division on the right, coordinated with the landing of two Army divisions of the XXIV Corps on adjacent beaches to the south.

All assault battalions landed without incident and advanced rapidly inland against negligible opposition. Yontan airfield was secured about 1100.

The rapid advance of the troops required numerous readjustments in unloading in order to meet the swiftly changing tactical situation, especially with regard to the Sixth Marine Division's northward advance over rugged terrain. Foul weather on Love+4 made it necessary to keep all landing ships, craft, and boats clear of the reef. An additional unloading point in Nago Wan northeast of Zampa Misaki was established for the support of the Sixth Marine Division.

Between Love+4 and Love+8, the Sixth Marine Division advanced considerably ahead of expectation and occupied the area north of the Ishikawa Isthmus to the base of the Motobu Peninsula beyond Nago. Reconnaissance and minesweeping operations conducted by commander, Mine Flotilla, in Nago Wan confirmed the practicability of using the beaches near Nago for further unloading to supply this division, and a number of ships were accordingly sent there while unloading was still in progress at Hagushi. Mass air attacks on several days caused some interruptions. On Love+9, commander, Southern Attack Force (CTF 55), assumed charge of unloading for all beaches in the Hagushi area, while commander, Northern Attack Force, took charge of unloading activities supporting the northward advance of the Sixth Marine Division and the unloading of resupply

ships and cargo ships of the first garrison echelon for the area north of Zampa Misaki. On Love+10, all assault ships loaded in the South Pacific area had been completely discharged and had departed for rear areas.

The rapid advance of the Sixth Marine Division in northern Okinawa dictated a revision of plans as originally projected for phases I and II. It appeared feasible to complete the conquest of the Motobu Peninsula and other sectors of the island north of Ishikawa Isthmus by overland advance, reducing the naval requirements to those of resupply and naval gunfire support. Interpretation of photographs made by aerial reconnaissance planes and tree-top-level observations over Ie Shima failed to disclose any signs of enemy activity on that island.

On 10 April, commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet, issued by dispatch Operator Order AS-45, by which commander, Amphibious Group 4, Pacific Fleet, was designated commander, TG 51.21, Ie Shima Attack Group. The task assigned was to capture and defend Ie Shima and to establish airbase facilities thereon. Assault shipping included Transport Squadron Seventeen (Commodore Brittain, USN). The Ie Shima Landing Force (Major General Bruce, USA) comprised the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division plus attached units and one Fleet Marine Force Amphibious reconnaissance battalion. The organization was formulated and the attack plan issued on 12 April. William-day, the day for assault landings on Ie Shima was set for 16 April, and Sugar-hour, the time of the landing for the first assault waves, was tentatively set at 0800. The landing force was embarked at Kerama Retto and reported to commander, Ie Shima Attack Group, at Hagushi on 13-15 April.

Operations preliminary to the main assault landing on Ie Shima included an unopposed landing on the night of William-4-William-3 on Menna Shima by the Fleet Marine Force amphibious reconnaissance battalion; pre-assault bombardment and air strikes, and reconnaissance of beaches and buoying of channels by underwater demolition teams commenced William-1. Throughout this period designated gunfire support ships continued to provide night direct support fire to elements of the III Amphibious Corps in northern Okinawa.

SYNOPSIS OF THE OPERATION

Sortie was scheduled for 0330 on William-day, 16 April. Although entire Hagushi anchorage had been blanketed with smoke as the result of a RED alert at 0220, the task group was able to get under way with only slight delay in schedule. Scheduled bombardment commenced at 0530 and continued until 0725. At 0534, commander, Ie Shima Attack Group, executed the signal "Land the Landing Force." Weather was excellent and landing conditions on all beaches favorable. Sugar-hour was fixed firmly at 0800. The first wave was dispatched at 0728 and landed on Red T-1 at 0759. First waves landed on Red T-2 at 0800 and on Green 1 at 0806. By 0835 all waves had landed on these three beaches. Throughout the landing, air support, naval gunfire, and division artillery were well coordinated.

The landing was unopposed and troops advanced against negligible resistance but found beaches, roads, and terrain heavily strewn with land mines. By 1130 RCT 306 had reached the northeast edge of the airfield. By nightfall two-thirds of the island had been secured against increasing enemy resistance. The runways of the airfields were found to be systematically cratered, trenched with large ditches, and densely mined. During the morning of William-day heavy enemy air raids from the north were launched against the Okinawa area. Most of the raids were destroyed or broken up by the CAP, radar picket ships, and screening ships before reaching the transport area. Seven planes broke through into the Ie Shima area, however, and were shot down by AA gunfire from ships of the adjacent screen and the attack group. Unloading of ammunition, water, rations, and medical supplies began at 0942. At midday Green Beach was abandoned and the handling of all supply and evacuation shifted to Red beaches. LST Units 1 and 2, carrying priority cargo, were completely unloaded by 1300, and excellent progress was reported by the other units of the Tractor Flotilla. General unloading began on William+1, but was slowed down by heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire directed at the dump areas.

The Division Reserve, RCT 307, was landed over Red T-3 and T-4 at 1130 on William + 1 (17 April). Ground fighting continued for the next several days against determined resistance. The

enemy had withdrawn to the base of Iegusugu Yama, the pinnacle dominating the island, and was well dug in at concealed positions on its slopes and in the adjacent town of Ie. Enemy fire was delivered from pill boxes and caves. Bands of infiltrators emerged from caves to harass our force after dark. The number of enemy troops encountered, as well as the number and variety of their hideouts, revealed the limitations of photo interpretation based on even the closest aerial reconnaissance. It was therefore recognized that the slopes of Iegusugu would require intensive artillery preparation. This was delivered from Mena Shima by division artillery on the morning of William+4.

At 0900 the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division again attacked. After a day of bitterly contested fighting the troops reached the base of the pinnacle, and some elements climbed to within a few yards of the top. At 1045 on the morning of William + 5 (21 April), commander, Ie Shima Attack Group, sent the following message to commander, Joint Expeditionary Force: "The American flag is now flying atop the pinnacle Ie Shima." Organized resistance has ceased and mopping up operations continued ashore, while over the beaches the discharge of assault shipping was completed. In addition, eight LST's carrying aviation engineer battalions, GPOAC 12, and other garrison elements, were unloaded.

Throughout the period of the assault and capture of Ie Shima, Commander Amphibious Group 4 retained continuing responsibility for naval support of phase I troop operations in northern Okinawa. Initially these duties were performed under the designation CTF 53; effective 18 April, however, CTF 51 dissolved TF 53 and named CTG 51.21 SOPA Ie Shima and Northern Okinawa. Offensive missions, as well as measures for defense, were included in the duties assigned. While operations were still in progress on Ie Shima, therefore, logistics support and naval gunfire support were provided to elements of the III Phib Corps in the Motobu Peninsula area. On Love+29 (30 April), the III Phib Corps received orders to move to southern Okinawa to join in operations against the enemy there, where the early rapid progress had been checked in mid-April by the bitterest of enemy resistance. The Twenty-

seventh Army Division relieved the Sixth Marines in the Motobu area, the transfer being completed on 5 May.

At Ie Shima re-embarkation of assault units of the Seventy-Seventh Infantry Division was begun on William+7 and completed on William+10. On 26 April GroPac 12 established port director facilities and the island commander, Ie Shima (Brigadier General Thomas, USA), assumed command ashore. Both here and at Nago Wan unloading of garrison shipping continued in spite of repeated air attacks at all hours of day and night, which resulted in damage to two merchant vessels.

On 12 May Rear Admiral Cobb, USN, commander, Naval Forces, Ryukyus, arrived at Ie Shima in *Taney* (AGC 37) for conferences preliminary to his relieving Rear Admiral Reifsnider as CTG 51.21 and SOPA Ie Shima-Northern Okinawa. Relief was effected at 0900 on 15 May, and Commander Amphibious Group 4, Pacific Fleet, returned to Hagushi to report to commander, Amphibious Forces (CTF 51), as directed.

***From: Commander, Amphibious Group 7
(Western Island Attack Group CTG
51.1)***

The Western Islands Attack Group (TG 51.1) was composed of one transport squadron with sufficient landing ships to lift a reinforced infantry division. Necessary screening ships and control craft were assigned to provide for independent movement and an amphibious assault on the scale of a single division.

The Seventy-seventh Infantry Division, reinforced, commanded by Maj. Gen. A. D. Bruce, USA, constituted the landing force. In addition a Marine reconnaissance battalion, less one company, was attached from the Fleet Marine Force.

The major tasks assigned this group were: first to capture Kerama Retto, a group of small islands about 15 miles southwest of Okinawa, the main objective for this operation, commencing 6 days prior to the main assault; second, to establish an anchorage in this island group for the logistic support of fleet units; third, to land two battalions of 155-mm. guns on Keise Shima, within 10,000 yards of Okinawa, on the day preceding the Okinawa

assault, for use in supporting the landing on western beaches, and subsequent operations.

Leyte was designated as assembly and loading point for the task group. TF 55, Southern Attack Force, also loaded and sailed from this point. Rear Admiral J. L. Hall, USN (CTF 55), coordinated logistics and exercised authority as senior officer present, Amphibious Forces Pacific Fleet, at Leyte, during the period of preparation for this operation.

Loading was from exposed, and for the most part, undeveloped beaches. Surf and swell damaged many boats, several beyond repair. In spite of delayed arrival, inexperienced personnel, and unfavorable weather, loading was completed on schedule, with minor exceptions.

A full week was provided in the schedule for training. Late arrival of assault LST's, and bad weather, combined to prevent carrying out the entire comprehensive plan which was prepared. Rough seas and excessive swells caused the loss of three LVT's and three LVT(A)'s, and damaged several other tractors. Army personnel losses were one dead, three missing probably drowned, and two injured.

Movement to the objective was made in three groups. Transports and assault LST's, proceeding separately, arrived on 26 March 1945. A smaller tractor group arrived 5 days later. Most of the escorts of the first two groups were fueled enroute from transports and LST's, respectively.

The assaults were conducted generally as planned, except that the two battalions which were to land from LCVP's on 26 March were landed in LVT's on 27 March, because reports from UDT reconnaissance showed that none of the beaches were suitable for landing from LCVP's. A garrison battalion was landed administratively without incident. Three additional landings were made by shore-to-shore movement. In spite of narrow beaches with bad approaches, and rugged and difficult terrain, all landings were quickly established against light opposition and control of the islands was gained rapidly and on schedule.

The landing of artillery and initial supplies on Keise Shima was successfully accomplished in one day, so that these guns were ready to render effective support during the main landings on 1 April 1945.

Except for the 155-mm gun battalions and the garrison battalion, no equipment or supplies were landed. By 1 April all other troops and equipment landed had been reembarked in readiness for further operations as directed.

Installation of antitorpedo nets was somewhat delayed by weather but was completed by 1 April. Fueling and ammunition replenishment was started on 28 March. The first seaplanes arrived and began operation from the seaplane base on 29 March.

Salvage and repair facilities established at Kerama Retto, in ships accompanying the assault movement, were fully occupied in emergency repair to battle damaged ships, commencing with Kimberly (DD 521) on 26 March 1945, and their work load was steadily increasing throughout the operation.

No serious opposition or interference by the enemy was encountered in actual landings, and casualties to troops were correspondingly light.

Enemy reaction took the form of suicide plane attacks principally. In TG 51.1, these caused serious damage to one destroyer, and two transports, and minor damage to two additional transports. One AKA, in addition, received serious underwater damage, presumably from a mine, during the period of this report.

On 2 April 1945, at 1900 (I), as provided in plans, and in accordance with orders of CTF 51, command of TG 51.1 was transferred to Commodore T. B. Brittain, USN, commander, Transport Squadron 17, and Rear Admiral Kiland took the task designation of SOPA Kerama Retto, CTG 51.15.

**From: Commander, Amphibious Group 7
(CTG 51.15) (Western Island Attack
Group)**

At 1900 (I), 2 April 1945, commander, Amphibious Group 7, having transferred command of TG 51.1 to Commander T. B. Brittain, USN, assumed the task designation of SOPA Kerama Retto, CTG 51.15, and continued to direct the operations of, and control naval defenses for, the fleet logistics base, Kerama Retto. These duties had already become well established during the previous 8 days since the initial landings for capture of the island group on 26 March 1945.

The command comprised the islands of the

Kerama Retto, enclosing an inner anchorage protected by a series of light antitorpedo nets, with surrounding anchorage areas outside the nets which were used for berthing of ships which could not be accommodated inside.

Minor naval craft for minesweeping, antisubmarine patrol, and screen of western anchorage areas, for anti-small-boat patrols and general gunboat duties, and for net maintenance, were assigned. In addition LSD, ARL, ARS, and ATF types, under control of CTG 51.6, were established in a well-sheltered part of the anchorage engaged in emergency repairs of ships which suffered battle damage, and ultimately in routine repairs and maintenance as well.

In addition to vessels actually assigned to TG 51.15, CTG 52.2, commander, Mine Flotilla, furnished minecraft when not required for primary duties to provide antisubmarine patrols for the entrances, to provide an A/S screen for the western anchorage and to augment area smoke screen. Without this reinforcement, defenses against submarines would have been limited to that furnished by the Transport Screen.

A boat pool, with headquarters in an LST mother ship, including LCT's, LCM's, LCVP, and LCPL, furnished necessary water transport for replenishment of ammunition to fire support ships, and for boat patrols and smoke protection, as well as other general services.

Navigational aids installed prior to 1 April 1945 were maintained for a short time by two PCS(H)'s, but thereafter were lifted or discontinued except for those actually required within the anchorage. The *Bowditch* also conducted surveys and hydrographic investigation, and established a light on a conspicuous rock, Naji, within the anchorage. This ship also published and issued field charts, corrected to include results of new surveys.

The Seaplane Base Group occupied a considerable part of the anchorage area and operated search planes, ASP, and Dumbo services on a steadily increasing scale.

A nucleus of logistic ships including station tankers for black oil and diesel oil, were replenished as necessary from fleet tankers under control of commander, Logistic Group, CTG 50.8, ordered in by CTF 51. One large capacity water tanker was kept at the anchorage, relieved by a full tanker

as soon as emptied. Aviation gasoline was supplied from fleet tankers, most of which carried part cargoes of this fuel.

Two to four ammunition ships, replaced as they were unloaded, supplemented by a final total of 10 LST's, specially equipped for handling ammunition, which remained at the anchorage, provided for prompt replenishment of naval ammunition expended in fire support and bombardment missions, as well as in actions against enemy aircraft. Battleships, cruisers, escort carriers, and destroyer types arrived daily for ammunition resupply and to turn in empty containers.

Stores ships from rear areas furnished dry and fresh provisions, and general stores, to ships based at Kerama Retto, to fire support ships, CVE's, and screening ships arriving for fuel or ammunition.

The Second Battalion of the Three Hundred and Fifth Infantry regiment with radar units, weather detachment, and other attached special troops, had been established as a garrison on Zamami Shima by the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division which had originally captured the islands. This garrison conducted daily sea patrols around the islands with landings on selected beaches, investigated reports of enemy activity on shore, and had occasional patrol actions with small units of Japanese troops which had avoided capture in the early days of the occupation. They continued to kill or capture small numbers of enemy troops almost daily. This detachment maintained a prisoner-of-war center and stockade and exercised military government for control of native civilians. A particularly important part of this service was the establishment and maintenance of a military cemetery, where many more naval than army dead were cared for. The number of graves increased steadily as naval personnel killed in action were brought to the anchorage almost daily in ships which had been seriously damaged in attack by suicide planes and Baka bombs.

The salvage and repair base, established initially with two ATF, 1 ARS, and 1 ARL on 27 March 1945, was expanded after 1 April 1945 by 2 LSD, 2 ARL, 3 ARB. The resources of these ships were quickly overloaded by badly damaged destroyers and other ships after the first major air attacks April 6, 1945. One ARD followed by an AR and one AG were still unable to prevent the number of ships, particularly destroyers, sent or towed to

the anchorage for repairs, from building up. Shortage of mechanics, and limited material for structural and other repairs, were serious handicaps to be overcome. Loan of CB personnel, and cannibalizing replacement units and equipment from unsalvageable vessels and ships patched up for return to rear bases helped considerably, but was far from solving the urgent problem presented by the large numbers of ships and craft with battle damage and major operational defects which were brought to "Wiseman's Cove." By 22 May the total number of ships and craft present for repairs was 47, in spite of the fact that, by that date, 137 ships and craft had already been returned to duty, and 42 additional had been made seaworthy for return to rear bases for final repairs. Although these totals include a majority of patrol craft and LCI types, and many returned to duty had relatively minor defects not always due to battle damage, the figures are considered impressive. It should be pointed out, that of the 47 ships and craft in repair status, 20 were various destroyer types (including DD, DE, DM, DMS) of recent construction.

By 22 May 1945 the following totals of salvage and repair ships and maintenance vessels were established at Kerama Retto, or in transit for that base:

One AR, two AD, three ARB, one ARL, one LSD, four ARD, one AG, one ARS, one ATF, two ATR, one ARG. Work on hand on 22 May 1945 at Kerama Retto, was sufficient to require full employment of all these for an estimated period of more than 45 days. This does not take into account the frequent additions to list of seriously damaged ships which were arriving for emergency repairs at an average, for destroyer types, of four each week.

A very considerable amount of the work required of the repair activity was on LCI types, and patrol craft (PC, SC, PCS, etc.) which had serious operational defects developed by long operating periods with inadequate upkeep opportunities. A major factor in the number of crippled craft of these two types was the lack of availability of necessary replacement parts for worn out and damaged equipment. This also effectively prevented the expeditions, or even possible, repair of these types with facilities and equipment in the

objective area, and resulted for many of these craft in long periods of operation on one engine or at reduced speeds. Overtaxed dock schedules and limited numbers of electronic repairmen, with lack of replacement parts, kept many badly needed patrol craft out of useful service because of inoperative sonar and radar equipment. In several cases it was found necessary to send patrol craft, particularly, back to rear area for repairs which could not be accomplished in the vicinity of the objective except after long delays.

An important service, frequently called for, was to provide salvage vessels and towing services to render assistance to ships attacked in the area west and southwest of Okinawa. These missions were usually accompanied by the PCE(R) 853 which performed invaluable service in collecting casualties, providing early care, and transporting them to large ships available, or a hospital ship for extended treatment.

Prompt handling of casualties from damaged ships, and arranging for burial of naval dead in the Zamami cemetery were major tasks. At least one casualty evacuation ship was maintained at Kerama Retto, and frequently all available medical personnel and improvised sick bay space on all large ships present were required to care for casualties brought to the anchorage.

During the early weeks of establishment, the Kerama Retto base was surprisingly free from enemy air attack. Except for the successful attack on 6 April 1945, in which two ships loaded with Army ammunition and one LST, all in or approaching the western anchorage, were crashed by suicide planes and destroyed, no damage was inflicted on ships at the anchorage until 28 April 1945. This was the more remarkable because anti-aircraft defenses were limited to the batteries of ships at the anchorage, none having been established on shore. On 28 April 1945 a suicider crashed the *Pinkney*, serving as casualty evacuation ship, with heavy toll of casualties; on 1 May 1945 another crashed the *Terror*, administrative flag ship of Rear Admiral Alexander Sharp, USN, commander, Mine Force, Pacific Fleet, causing considerable damage and many casualties; on 6 May 1945, in daylight and clear weather, a third plane in a bold attack crashed the *St. George*, fortunately causing only moderate damage with few casualties.

The mounting success of air attacks on Jap shipping by planes from the seaplane base, the increasing number of ships basing at Kerama Retto, particularly repair ships and many disabled units, together with the smaller numbers concentrated off the several unloading areas made it only a question of time until the enemy should attack Kerama Retto in force, as a particularly choice target. Furthermore the enforced reduction of radar picket stations because of heavy losses of fighter-direction destroyers, and the relocation of the reduced number of such stations, had the result of leaving Kerama Retto exposed to air attack from the direction of Formosa. Representations made to CTF 51, and that officer's thorough appreciation of conditions existing, resulted in action by the island commander to provide urgently required anti-aircraft protection for the base by assigning anti-aircraft artillery to be established in selected locations among the various islands surrounding the anchorage. Initial echelons of those units, and of radar air warning and fighter-direction units, began to arrive at Kerama Retto on 18 May 1945, with main components arriving 22 May 1945.

At 0000 (I) on 17 May 1945, Captain Rhoads, USN, under designation of CTG 50.9.5, commander, Service Squadron 10 Representative "B", Kerama Retto, relieved CTG 51.15 of the logistics functions relating to replenishment of fuel, water, ammunition, and stores, together with direct control of repair and maintenance facilities, and assignment of berths within Kerama Retto anchorages.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 5 (The Demonstration Group) (CTG 51.2)

The Demonstration Group (TG 51.2), consisting of Transport Group Charlie (TU 51.2.1), and Demonstration Tractor Group (TG 51.8), was assigned the task of transporting the Army reserve consisting of the Second Marine Division and certain Third Amphibious Corps troops and equipment, to Okinawa and to land this reserve when directed by commander, Joint Expeditionary Force (CTF 51). On Love and Love+1-day the primary mission of this group was to make a demonstration off the southeastern beaches of Okinawa, coordinating this demonstration on Love-day with the actual landing on the Haguchi beaches by Task Force 53 and Task Force 55. In addition,

this group was assigned the task of landing the Second Marine Division on the eastern islands, Tsugen Shima, Kutaka Shima, Harahika Banare, and Ichi Banare, off the east coast of Okinawa on L - 2 day if CTF Alternate Plan was placed in effect. Since this group carried the Army reserve, it was necessary to be prepared to land the Second Marine Division in whole or in part on any beach at any time when directed by CTF 5. Planning proceeded on this basis and references (f) to (i) were issued to cover the required operations.

Staging and preparation for this operation was performed at Saipan. Major General Watson, USMC, commanding general, Second Marine Division, was responsible for staging the landing force and Rear Admiral Jerould Wright, USN, commander, Amphibious Group 5, was designated as the embarkation authority.

The degree to which the demonstration succeeded in containing enemy forces in southern Okinawa is difficult to assess from information presently available. A possible indication may be manifested by the following excerpts from a news broadcast from Radio Tokyo, intercepted by the flagship at 1500 (I), 2 April 1945. The extent of enemy action and damage imposed was "slightly" exaggerated:

"An enemy landing attempt on the eastern coast of Okinawa on Sunday morning was completely foiled with heavy losses to the enemy, according to a report from the Ryukyu front. The attempt was made in the vicinity of Minato Kawa on the eastern shore, simultaneously with a landing on the southern coast of the island.

"The enemy in the landing attempt at 8 o'clock Sunday morning, deployed 100 landing barges including 30 large and 70 small vessels in the water 5 kilometers off Minato Kawa.

"The Japanese deliberately withheld fire until the enemy had reached a point 800 meters from the shore, then all of a sudden the Japanese coastal batteries and garrison troops went into action, showering a concentrated fusilade on the enemy.

"The enemy was forced to withdraw as far as 10,000 meters from the shore after being mowed down one after the other."

Attack by enemy planes was undetected by either radar or visual means until they were close aboard. Flash Blue, Control Green, had been set by CTF 52, who, at the time, exercised fighter direction. The planes approached low on the water in the dim light of the early dawn. One unidentified plane had been observed by commander-in-chief in the Ancon but the pip for this plane immediately merged with those of three divisions of friendly planes which were orbiting at their designated stations 10 miles westward. This bogey was observed just prior to the attack and was believed by commander-in-chief personnel to be a friendly plane. No other unidentified planes appeared on the radar screen at this time.

On 2 April the demonstration was repeated in its entirety. At 0634 an enemy plane, thought to be a Sonia, appeared out of the clouds over the transport area and crossed the transport area to the eastward. The plane was taken under heavy anti-aircraft fire by all ships in the vicinity but escaped through the clouds. The only other enemy reaction to the demonstration on Love+1-day was one salvo of four rounds which landed close to the U. S. S. *Gregory*, a screening destroyer. The location of the firing battery was not determined. At 1200, all boats had been recovered and this group retired, the Transport Group to Area Niece and the Tractor Group to Area Cousin, to await further orders. The transport screen consisted of *Van Valkenburgh*, *Brown*, *Gainard*, *Cowell*, *Seid*, *Little*, and *Ammen*. At 1101 on 2 April, the *Theemim*, *Lacerta*, *Barrow*, and *Bladen*, escorted by the *Gayety* and carrying Third Amphibious Corps equipment, proceeded to the western beaches on orders of CTF 51. At 2300, 4 April, the *Leo*, carrying equipment for MAG 31, was directed by CTG 51 to proceed to western beaches, and a unit consisting of the *Leo* (OTC), *Cowell*, *Gainard*, and *Seid* returning to base for fuel, proceeded immediately. *Cowell* and *Gainard*, upon refueling, rejoined the formation at 2342, 5 April, and 0225, 6 April, respectively; the *Seid* requiring repairs to sound equipment, reported to CTG 51.5 and did not return. At 1725, 3 April, *Hadley* joined the screen. The *Leroy Wilson* was detached from the screen of TG 51.8 and ordered to join Transport Group Charlie in Area Niece at 2400, 4 April, to augment the screen and at 1455, 5 April, *Bebas* joined screen as replacement for *Seid*. During the

retirement and operation in Area Nice several enemy floating mines were observed. At 1730, 2 April, the *Ammen* destroyed a mine in position latitude 25°31' N., longitude 128°39'.7' E., at 0700, 4 April, the *Gainard* destroyed a mine in position latitude 24°56' N., longitude 130°05' E.

The Transport and Tractor Groups operated in their assigned areas on April 3, 4, 5, and 6. They were unmolested by the enemy, although between 0900 and 1000 on 6 April, an enemy snooper circled the formation at a distance of about 20 miles. On 6 April at 1500, Transport Group Charlie and Tractor Group were directed by CTF 51 to retire southeastward to operate in assigned areas and proceeded immediately. The Transport Group was assigned an area between longitude 132 and 134, 10 to 25 miles north of route defined, and the Tractor Group an area between longitude 132 and 133, 10 miles north of the Transport area.

At 0630, 7 April, *Van Valkenburgh*, *Brown*, *Hadley*, *Little* and *Leray Wilson* were fueled from the transports to 80 percent capacity and the *Leray Wilson* was detached and ordered to join the Tractor Group (TG 51.8). At 0730, 9 April, *Pinkney* and *Berrien*, escorted by *Brown* (OTC) and *Ammen* proceeded to Haguchi beaches in accordance with orders of CTF 51. At the same time LST's 725, 812, 838, 1032, PC's 466, and 1177 were detached from TG 51.8 to proceed to Haguchi beaches, the *Little* being detached from the Transport Group to serve as escort for this unit. TG 51.2 less the detached units was ordered to proceed to Saipan to debark the personnel and minimum housekeeping equipment of the Second Marine Division. The Transport Group proceeded, arriving at Saipan at 1400 14 April 1945 at which time TG 51.2 was dissolved, transron 15 to await orders of CTF 51 and the screen and escort vessels to report to commander, Forward Area, for duty in TF 51 escort pool.

From: Commander, Cruiser Division 13 (CTF 54) (Gunfire Support and Covering Force)

The major units of the command, with a few exceptions, were assembled at Ulithi, Western Carolines, by 15 March, having completed operations in connection with the Occupation of Iwo Jima.

Vice Admiral Oldendorf, who was assigned to command of the Task Force, arrived on 10 March with his staff and hoisted his flag in *Tennessee*. On 10 March, his barge struck a buoy in the anchorage, injuring him and his chief of staff to an extent requiring hospitalization. Rear Admiral Deyo was directed on 15 March by commander in chief, United States Pacific Fleet, to assume temporary command of Battleship Squadron 1, Battleship Division 2, and Task Force 54. At the time of receipt of these orders, Rear Admiral Deyo was serving as commander, Cruiser Division 13, with his flag in *Birmingham*. On 15 March, he hoisted his flag in *Tennessee* in compliance with orders, and an intensive period of planning and indoctrination by conference was begun.

Rear Admiral Rodgers who relieved as commander, Cruiser Division 13, brought his staff. The undersigned, thereupon brought his staff as a whole to Battleship Squadron 1, where a new staff was being assembled for Vice Admiral Oldendorf. It was necessary to make a hasty organization to meet very pressing needs for planning. The results were very satisfactory and speak volumes for the skill and tireless energy with which the large makeshift staff applied themselves to their many tasks. Captain Bates, though still on the sick list, returned to the *Tennessee* the day before sailing at his own request and was extremely helpful from then on.

Commander, Battleship Squadron 1, Operation Plan No. 1-45 and commander, Battleship Squadron 1, Retirement Plan No. 1-45, were issued on 18 March.

Composition of enemy forces encountered:

Surface forces.—On the evening of 6 April 1945, units of the enemy fleet on a southerly course were sighted by United States submarines south of the Bungo Channel. Originally identified by radar as large warships and many escorts, this force was later observed to consist of the battleship *Yamato*, the light cruiser *Yahagi*, an unidentified light cruiser or large DD, and eight destroyers.

It was first visually sighted at 0825 (I) on the 7th when an Essex search plane reported its presence in latitude 33°44' N., longitude 129°10' E., course 300, speed 12 knots. Later it was also visually sighted by Kerama Retto PBM search

planes at 1030 (I) in latitude 30°50' N., longitude 129°00' E.

TF 54 was assembled to intercept and destroy this force which appeared to be attempting a hit and run strike upon the assault area. Disposed in an approach disposition, TF 54 was prepared for battle.

TF 58 operating to the eastward of Okinawa launched an aircraft strike, which made contact with this enemy force in the vicinity of the PBM reported position, and which then attacked in great strength.

Following this strike was a report by commander, TF 58, that all enemy ships except five destroyers had been seen to burn, break up, or list heavily. It was estimated that the *Yamato*, the *Yahagi*, and three destroyers had been sunk. This estimate has since been confirmed by Tokyo.

Air forces.—The enemy air reaction was definitely positive. Insofar as he was not frustrated by TF 58 (Fast Carriers), and TG 52.1 (CVE's), he launched daily air attacks against our forces in the Okinawa area. These attacks, at first both fast carrier groups and Army VLR units were not in strength nor coordinated. They were staged from the Empire, Kikai Shima, Formosa, and Miyako Shima.

However, in spite of repeated strikes by our air forces, the enemy massed his heterogeneous air types into attack groups and on 6, 12, 20, 22, 27 April and 3-4 May attacked in strength in the Okinawa area. On these days his attacks assumed some semblance of coordination in which the suicide crash plane played the major role. Many ships in the Okinawa area were hit by suicide planes. A phase of the coordination was a "follow through" night torpedo attack.

It was observed that enemy attacks were vigorously opposed by our CAP and it was further observed that the enemy planes that finally reached the objective area were but remnants of the enemy air groups that had been able to filter through the CAP.

During the period from 21 March 1945 to 5 May 1945, TF 54 (Rear Admiral M. L. Deyo, USN, also in temporary command of Battleship Squadron 1 and Battleship Division 2, U. S. S. *Tennessee*, flagship) functioned as the gunfire and covering force for the assault on Okinawa Jima, Ryukyus Islands. This included the movement from Ulithi

Atoll to the objective area, 21-25 March 1945, support of preliminary operations, 25-31 March 1945, and support of assault and subsequent operations 1 April 1945.

The movement group from Ulithi Atoll to the objective was under the command of the commander, TF 54, and included certain ships from other task forces, which were required at the objective for the preliminary operations. From 25 March to 31 March 1945 preliminary softening up operations were conducted under the command of the commander, TF 52 (Rear Admiral W. P. Blandy, USN, commander, First Amphibious Group, Pacific Fleet, U. S. S. *Estes*, flagship), and gunfire ships from TF 54 were furnished to TF 52 as required for support. These operations included the capture and occupations of the Kerama Retto and Keise Jima, minesweeping of the entire objective area, and beach reconnaissance and destructions of obstacles by the underwater demolition teams. At night TF 54, less night gunfire ships, acted as a covering force to protect the other ships in the Okinawa area against enemy surface attack. From 1 April 1945 to 5 May 1945 TF 54 furnished gunfire ships to the commander, TF 51 (Vice Admiral R. K. Turner, USN, commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet, U. S. S. *Eldorado*, flagship) for support of the assault and subsequent operations against Okinawa and adjacent islands. At night TF 54, less night gunfire ships, acted as a covering force for protection of the assault area, and ships in that area, against enemy surface attack.

General:

(a) The enemy reacted to our occupation of positions in the Ryukyus with all of the forces within his command using suicide units such as planes, motor torpedo boats, etc., as the background of his attacks on our surface ships.

He has employed his surface fleet units, his submarines, large and midget, his airforce, his mines in fields and floating, his explosive-laden motor torpedo boats, and his swimmers armed with destructive devices, for the purpose of stopping our advance, but to no avail.

(b) He was not taken by tactical surprise, as was evidenced by the fact that minesweepers, slightly in advance of TF 54 which arrived in the area in the van of our forces, were attacked by air.

The early radar detection of approaching enemy planes was very helpful and contrasted markedly with the Lingayen operations where land masses enshrouded the enemy's approach. As a consequence, ships were alerted and their gunfire was effective in destroying many enemy planes which otherwise might have reached their targets.

On 12 April, the enemy introduced our forces to his much discussed secret weapon called "Viper" or piloted rocket flying bomb—one of which was captured on Okinawa after the landing. This was later dubbed the "Baka" bomb.

(c) *Motor torpedo boats.*—Motor torpedo boats, armed with depth charges, of a type similar to those encountered elsewhere have been used and are similar to those described in recent intelligence documents. The tasks assigned this boat appear to have been to harass and destroy shipping in the target area and to endeavor to drive off the bombardment ships, especially at night or in low visibility. Upwards of 350 of these boats were captured or destroyed in the Kerama Retto area alone. No uniform pattern of organization or deployment was observed, except that the mission was suicide.

There were reported instances of the enemy in canoes armed with hand grenades approaching our ships especially those ships near shore at night. However, when challenged, instead of attacking they either rapidly retired or committed suicide by use of the hand grenades.

(d) *Suicide swimmers.*—As in Lingayen, a few enemy swimmers armed with explosives were encountered approaching transport shipping. They were ineffective.

(e) *Submarines.*—The enemy, for the first time in the Central Pacific Campaign, appeared to attempt to use his submarines aggressively in strength in the Okinawa operation. Large submarines operated to the eastward and midget submarines to the westward of Okinawa.

Many torpedo wakes, periscope sightings, and sound contacts as well as sunken enemy submarines testify to their presence. On the whole, his effort was a dismal failure which was a very great boon to us. Our dispersal and losses in destroyers might have resulted in serious setbacks if the enemy had possessed a skillful and resolute submarine service.

From: Commander, Cruiser Division 5 (CTF 54) (Gunfire Support and Covering Force)

The task force was in the area of operations on 5 May. Prior operations of TF 54 are covered in the action report submitted by Rear Admiral M. L. Deyo, commander, Cruiser Division 13.

The task as directed was "Support the capture of Okinawa by sustained neutralizing, destruction, counterbattery and harassing bombardments * * * and by delivering call fire, deep supporting, counterbattery, illumination and harassing fires. Destroy shore installations for firing torpedoes. Prevent the movement by sea of enemy troops for support or evacuation of the position."

At the commencement of the period reported on, all of the ships were disposed in the Okinawa area.

Whenever the flying weather was fair or better, the Japanese continued their air attacks. The radar pickets bore the brunt of these raids which were not intercepted by the CAP; but small groups almost daily sifted through to the ships around Okinawa. The enemy night raids increased in strength as the moon waxed fuller. During the period of the bright moon, the enemy planes were not interfered with except by a few night fighters. The security plans of commander, TG 54.1, and commander TF 54, provided for continuing fire support under these diverting conditions day and night except when directly under air or suicide boat attack. Cruising Disposition 6 VT was designed and used at dusk for continuing fire support while giving the maximum defense against suiciders.

If the enthusiastic dispatches addressed to CTG 51.22 and individual ships are a criterion, the fire support was heavily destructive and of a very high standard; and always continuous.

Continuous review of the Flycatcher operations was made and in cooperation with others, improvements were made under commander, TF 51 and at his direction. Planning for future similar operations was also effected.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 1 (CTF 52) (Support Force)

This report covers the operations against Okinawa Gunto of the Amphibious Support Force

(TF 52), and Western Islands Attack Group (TG 51.1), during the period 21 March to 1 April prior to the arrival of the main landing and assault forces of the Joint Expeditionary Force; and the operations of the Eastern Fire Support and Attack Group (TG 51.19) for the period 1 April to 12 April, subsequent to the arrival of the main body of the Joint Expeditionary Force.

During the period 24 March to 1 April, this command, as CTF 52, coordinated and exercised general supervision over all activities at the objective. At 0600 (L) on 1 April CTF 51 also assumed title CTF 52, and this command thereupon assumed title CTG 51.19, the Eastern Fire Support Group. After the arrival of the landing and assault elements of the Joint Expeditionary Force on 1 April, this command supervised all activities to the south and east of Okinawa until relieved by ComCruDiv 4 on 12 April.

The mission of this force, during the period Love-8 to Love-1-day, inclusive, was to capture and defend Kerama Retto and initiate the development of a logistics anchorage therein; to capture and defend Keise Shima and establish artillery thereon; to neutralize or destroy enemy installations in the Okinawa Gunto which threatened the approach and security of the Joint Expeditionary Force; and to effect the maximum possible destruction of enemy forces and defenses of Okinawa Jima by aircraft and surface ship bombardment, minesweeping, and underwater demolition, in order to facilitate the capture of Okinawa Jima south of the Ishikawi Isthmus.

The Amphibious Support Force, composed of heavy fire support ships from TF 54, carriers and aircraft from TG 52.1, minesweeping vessels of TG 52.2 and one section of the Underwater Demolition Group (TG 52.11), assembled at Ulithi and departed in echelons to the objective commencing on 19 March. The Western Islands Attack Group mounted at Leyte and departed for the objective on 21 March. The first echelon of TF 52, Mine Group One, arrived at the objective on 24 March and commenced minesweeping operations under the protection of fast battleship bombardment by TF 59 and air cover provided by TF 58. The remaining echelons from TF 2 arrived at the objective on 25 March. Systematic minesweeping of channels and approaches to the Kerama Retto and Preferred and Demonstration Beaches of Okinawa

was commenced. Underwater demolition team reconnaissance of the islands of Kerama Retto proceeded according to schedule in preparation for the assault by TG 51.1. On 26 March, the Western Islands Attack Group (TG 51.1) arrived at Kerama Retto, and the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division commenced the seizure of the islands of that group. In the meantime, the fire-support ships, closing the preferred and demonstration beaches to the limit of swept areas, commenced systematic bombardment and destruction of defenses in these areas. The capture of the islands of Kerama Retto, establishment of a logistics anchorage therein, establishment of seaplane base and initiation of seaplane searches therefrom and refueling and ammunitioning of ships present in the area proceeded in a rapid and orderly manner. In addition, the reduction of enemy defenses on the preferred and demonstration beaches of Okinawa by gunfire and underwater demolitions and clearance of mines advanced according to schedule so that by the evening of Love-1-day, 31 March, all preparations for the assault on Okinawa had been completed. Upon arrival of the attack forces on 1 April, Rear Admiral Blandy became CTG 51.19. This task group provided fire support on the eastern and southern coasts of Okinawa, completed the clearance of mines in the Chimu Wan and Nakagusuku Wan, supervised reconnaissance of the eastern islands by the FMF Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, and with BLT 3/105 of the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division captured Tsugen Jima. *Estes*, with two APA's and four LST's of the Eastern Islands Attack Group, remained at anchor in Nakagusuku Wan on the nights of 10 and 11 April, to better support the troops on Tsugen Jima, and expedite their reembarkation. Battleships were brought into Nakagusuku Wan to augment close support of the seventh Infantry Division, previously provided by cruisers and destroyers from positions inside the bay behind the enemy lines. Hydrographic survey of Nakagusuku Wan was initiated, as was UDT reconnaissance of beaches along the shores of Nakagusuku Wan and Chimu Wan to determine their suitability for unloading operations. On 12 April, ComCruDiv 4 in Wichita assumed command of TG 51.19 and ComPhibGrp 1 in *Estes* reported to CTF 51 for further assignment.

**From: Commander, THIRD Amphibious Corps
(Northern Attack Force)**

The seizure of Okinawa Shima was to have been executed in two phases. Phase I contemplated the seizure of the island south of the Ishikawa Isthmus and Phase II the seizure of that part of the island north of Ishikawa Isthmus. As the assault phase developed it became apparent that the great bulk of the Japanese forces were concentrated in the south. Due to the practically unopposed landing, rapid initial advances, and the light resistance in the north, phase II of the operation was completed before phase I. This contingency was foreseen and except for the time element, had little effect in the execution of the operation plan.

The III Amphibious Corps conducted the seizure of northern Okinawa. Except for a strongly organized pocket on Motobu Peninsula, enemy resistance was classified at various times as sporadic, light, negligible, or entirely lacking. The rate of advance was governed mainly by the rugged nature of the terrain and poor lines of communication rather than by enemy opposition.

From: Commanding General, FIRST Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force (Northern Attack Force)

When assault waves of the First Marine Division surged onto the western slopes of Okinawa Jima on Easter morning of 1945 they came expecting to wage one of the costliest battles yet fought in the war against Japan—and 3 days later on the eastern beaches they were still looking for that battle. The division had raced across its 9-mile-wide zone of action virtually "standing up" against light, scattered resistance.

To the south, Army units of the XXIV Corps, also operating against negligible opposition, reached the east coast with similar speed and swung south for a drive on the center of enemy resistance above Naha, principal city and capital of the island. The American advance continued without pause till it reached the Japanese defensive network running across the island generally north of the Naha-Shuri line. There it was halted by the enemy for the first time, and our forces paused for an extended period to bring reinforcements ashore and allow for extensive air, artillery

and naval gunfire preparation before renewing the attack.

The Sixth Marine Division, in assault on the left of this organization, sped through its lightly held area and by 16 April had elements patrolling the northern tip of the island. The only heavy opposition found in its sector was on Motobu Peninsula, a large area jutting into the China Sea north of Ishikawa Isthmus.

Initial action in the Nansei Shoto was something of a departure from earlier campaigns of this division, not only in the surprising lack of resistance but in the type of warfare. Here was the blitz-style war of speed and movement, combined with its later stages with the same type aggressive patrolling and mopping up that this division had seen earlier on Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester.

The rolling checkerboard terrain of this division's zone of action on Okinawa was ideally suited for defensive tactics. Most of the First Marine Division sector was excellent defensive country: gently rolling, but covered with a multitude of finger ridges and interlocking valleys. A vast part of the area was covered with emplacements in varying states of readiness, plainly indicating earlier Jap intentions to defend this area. The usual caves, many of them civilian shelters, honey-combed the entire zone. The hills and terraced fields were interlaced by, as one observer put it, "an excellent network of very poor roads." Most of the streams were spanned by narrow bridges which the enemy had made little attempt to destroy. The principal bridge over the Bisha Gawa below Hiza was still intact. High ground to the east of Yontan airfield had excellent command of all landing beaches and observation to the other coast and far to the north and south. The only thing lacking in the defensive setup was the most important: personnel to defend the ground.

The air battle raging off Okinawa continued into the night of 6-7 April with the results going increasingly in American favor though some Navy surface units were reported hit. There was intermittent AA fire throughout the night, but no bombs or Red alerts in the division area. Ground activity was nil.

Our patrols were operating in cooler weather and light rains on 7 April. Japs were still present in this sector and carrying on harassing activity,

but groups of four or five now were the largest encountered by this organization.

By this date, morning and dusk patrols of Marine fighter units were operating from Yontan airfield in support of our ground forces and carrier-based aircraft.

The picture of the Japanese defensive plan on Okinawa had been greatly clarified by 8 April. The situation still was static in the marine's sector, but the XXIV Corps were now running into stiff resistance in the south. The enemy held strategic high ground and was well dug in throughout the rugged terrain north of Naha and was reported using massed artillery in that area—almost the first instance in Pacific warfare. It was now evident that the Japanese commander intended to make his stand in the south of the island and had moved the majority of his troops and equipment to that area. Intelligence estimated some 53,000 Japs in that zone, including the Sixty-second Division, the Twenty-fourth division, and the Forty-fourth Independent Mixed Brigade. In the late evening of the 8th three battalions of the Eleventh Marines were ordered to stand by to move to the support of the Army.

From: Commanding General, SIXTH Marine Division (North Attack Force)

Landings commenced at 0837, 1 April 1945, under ideal sea conditions and covered by excellent air and naval gunfire support. Assault battalions of the Fourth and Twenty-second Marines, landing in accordance with the Preferred Plan (see appendix 2) were almost unopposed on the beaches. They drove rapidly inland over the rising terraced terrain leading to the Yontan Airfield and Hanza Town. Only minor resistance was met in the division zone and consisted mainly of isolated pockets built around light machine guns in cave emplacements. The Yontan airfield was secured by the Fourth Marines by noon of Love-day and found to be essentially intact. Following the assault units, succeeding elements of the division moved ashore with great rapidity, until about noon when the receding tide exposed an exceedingly rough reef floor, which impeded the landing of reserves and supplies. Two assault tank companies scheduled to reach the beach at 0850 were actually entirely ashore and moving to support

the infantry at 0905. The entire Fifteenth Marines was ashore by 1530 and had registered along the defensive perimeter prior to nightfall. During the day contact was made and maintained with the First Marine Division on the right.

At the close of operations on Love-day, the division had secured the O-2 line (see appendix 1) and was well disposed for a vigorous resumption of the attack on the following morning. The Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, in division reserve, landed shortly after noon and was assembled in the zone of the Fourth Marines preparatory to early release. The First Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marines, released by III Phib Corps to the Sixth Division at 1300, was landed at 1500 and was assigned a defensive position in support of the Second Battalion, Twenty-second Marines, which was protecting the critical division left flank. Love-day had proved successful beyond all expectations; the only unsatisfactory element was the slow movement ashore of supplies, due, for the most part, to undesirable reef conditions which prevented LST's from beaching without extended reconnaissance.

From: Commanding General, TENTH Army (Southern Attack Force)

The joint Army, Navy, Marine forces which comprised the Joint Expeditionary Force captured the principal islands in the Okinawa Gunto during the period 26 March-30 June. Throughout the entire campaign naval, air, and surface forces supported the operation and contributed an equal share to the victory. Assigned tasks were executed by all components of the Tenth Army, skilfully and expeditiously. Rain, mud, and fatigue were overcome by sheer courage. Sustained fighting and difficult terrain that often required the use of scaling ladders and other special equipment could not stop the relentless destruction of the Japanese military forces.

During the 82-day campaign, the Tenth Army landed on a fortified enemy-held island, trapped the principal elements of the Imperial Japanese Thirty-second Army, and gradually destroyed it in toto. Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushigima, who commanded the Thirty-second Army, fought skilfully and tenaciously along predetermined defensive positions; but the American Army, from its com-

manding generals to the individual soldiers, proved its ability to defeat the Japanese Army in its own backyard.

The victory of the Tenth Army was not gained without losses. Army, Navy, and Marine services lost invaluable officers and men as the price for success. The commanding general, Tenth Army, Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, was killed by enemy artillery fire just 3 days before final victory, and on the following day, Brig. Gen. Claudius M. Easley, second in command of the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division, was killed by enemy action. These losses were inflicted upon the Tenth Army in its hour of victory, and they may be taken as an indication of the ferocity of the battle. Total battle casualties of the Tenth Army, from 26 March to 30 June, were 38,976. Army units suffered 4,288 killed, 17,558 wounded, 91 missing, and Marine units lost 2,744 killed, 13,523 wounded, 90 missing. Casualties by divisions were: 3,252 for the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division, 6,004 for the Seventh Infantry Division, 5,026 for the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division, 7,252 for the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division, 94 for the Second Marine Division, 7,962 for the First Marine Division, and 8,242 for the Sixth Marine Division. The heaviest losses in the Tenth Army occurred during the period 19-22 April, when the XXIV Corps suffered 2,851 casualties¹ and from 10 to 19 May, when the III Phib and XXIV Corps² combined total was 6,470.²

The Japanese Army suffered irreplaceable losses. The Sixty-second Division, the Twenty-fourth Division, and the Forty-fourth Independent Mixed Brigade were destroyed completely. One hundred seven thousand, five hundred thirty-nine³ enemy soldiers were known to have been killed, and 7,401⁴ were taken prisoner. Countless others undoubtedly lie buried in the hundreds of caves that were sealed during the battle. All of the enemy's supplies and equipment were either destroyed or captured. A large and important contribution to the destruction of the Japanese armed forces was made when this beacon in the Japanese home waters was snuffed out.

¹ During the attack on the Machinato line.

² Reduction of the Shuri position.

³ An additional 3,764 Japs are estimated to have been killed.

⁴ Not counted in this total were 3,339 POW's (labor troops).

COMMAND AND ORGANIZATION

From: Commander, FIFTH Fleet (Officer Commanding RYUKYUS Operation)

Commander in chief, Pacific Ocean areas, warning order of 9 October 1944 designated Admiral R. A. Spruance as officer commanding the Ryukyus operation, Vice Admiral R. K. Turner as commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, and Lt. Gen. S. B. Buckner, USA, as commander Expeditionary Troops. On 31 December 1944, the commander in chief, Pacific Ocean areas, issued Operation Plan No. 14-44, directing the Ryukyus operation and directed commander, Fifth Fleet, to capture, occupy, defend, and develop air and naval bases on Okinawa Retto, to gain and maintain control of the Nansei Shoto area, and to protect air and sea communications along the Central Pacific axis. All forces of the Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean areas were assigned supporting tasks and the target date was designated as 1 April 1945. On 3 January 1945 Commander, Fifth Fleet, issued Operation Plan No. 1-45.

As the operation opened, United States forces had established air and naval bases in the Marshalls, Marianas, Admiralties, Western Carolines, Iwo Jima, Leyte, Mindoro, and Luzon. Operations in the Philippines were continuing, as was mopping up on Iwo Jima. The Okinawa operation was calculated to divert enemy pressure from those places. Enemy naval power was still a threat, although his forces had been reduced to such an extent that his surface threat was likely to be exerted only in the form of raids and reinforcement attempts. It was assumed that he might attempt raids upon our supply routes and that morning twilight raids upon our transport area might be made by fast surface forces leaving the Inland Sea at the previous dusk. Plans contemplated the employment of surface forces of the Striking Force (TF 58) or the Gunfire and Covering Force (TF 54), as appropriate, suitably disposed, and in sufficient strength to meet any expected surface raids. It was further assumed that enemy submarines would be active along our supply routes and in the objective area. Three anti-submarine warfare units were available, in addition to the usual screens and patrols, to meet this

threat. Two groups, which included one CVE each, were assigned to the operational control of commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, to whom was assigned the task of protecting shipping along routes and in the objective area. The third ASW unit, to which no CVE was attached, was assigned to the operational control of commander, Logistic Support Group, for ASW employment in the vicinity of replenishment groups. Aircraft of the Logistic Support Group were employed with this unit. The enemy air forces appeared to be his most formidable weapon with which to oppose our plans. The objective area was within easy flying range of Kyushu, and it was possible for the enemy to use the entire strength of Empire-based air forces against us. It was imperative that we neutralize enemy airfields, particularly in Kyushu, Formosa, and the Nansei Shoto to the maximum practicable extent in order to maintain reasonable control of the air in the Okinawa area.

A British task force consisting of two BB, four CV, six CL, and 14 DD, Vice Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings, K. C. B., RN, commanding, was assigned to the Fifth Fleet on 23 March and was designated TF 57 and given the task of neutralizing air installations in Sakishima Gunto. This task force provided its own logistic services from British Pacific Fleet sources, and was subject to withdrawal from the operation on 7 days' notice. Commencing on 26 March, TF 57 was able to maintain a schedule of 2 days of strikes alternated with 2 days of replenishment, until 20 April. On replenishment days, neutralization of Sakishima Gunto was maintained by CVE groups. After a major replenishment period at Leyte, TF 57 resumed operations on 4 May, continuing through 25 May, after which it departed for Sydney.

Supporting forces

Southwest Pacific Force:

(1) Searches over the China Sea, Strait of Formosa, and the sea areas east of Formosa.

(2) Strikes from Luzon on enemy air bases in Formosa and continued neutralization of those air bases.

China-based air forces:

Searches over the Chinese coastal area.

Supporting forces—Continued

XX Bomber Command:

All available sorties against enemy installations in northern Formosa.

XXI Bomber Command:

(1) Strikes against Okinawa airfields and defenses from L-30- through L-10-day.

(2) Strikes against Kyushu fields from L-9- through L-5-day, during carrier strikes against Okinawa.

(3) Strikes against the Tokyo area from L-4-day on.

(4) Photographic reconnaissance of Okinawa on about L-20- and about L-10-day.

Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet:

(1) Provide intelligence of movements of enemy naval units.

(2) Interdict the sea approaches to Okinawa from Japan and Formosa.

(3) Provide lifeguard services as required.

Ground forces committed

The initial ground forces assigned to TF 56 (Expeditionary Troops) were as follows:

Commander Expeditionary Troops—Lieutenant General Buckner, USA.

Tenth Army:

Headquarters and Army troops:

XXIV Corps—Major General Hodge, USA.

Seventh Infantry Division;

Seventy-seventh Infantry Division;

Ninety-sixth Infantry Division.

III Amphibious Corps—Major General Geiger, USMC.

First Marine Division;

Second Marine Division;

Sixth Marine Division.

Floating reserve—Twenty-seventh Infantry Division.

Area reserve troops (under control of CmcPOA)—Eighty-first Infantry Division.

Estimate of enemy forces

Prior to the commencement of the operation, it was estimated that the enemy had approximately 55,000 troops disposed on Ie Shima and Okinawa under the command of the Thirty-second Army

with headquarters at Naha or Shuri. It was estimated that the enemy force consisted of at least one division (Sixty-second) and a reinforced brigade together with necessary service troops and artillery and tanks. This estimate rose to approximately 68,000 troops shortly after L-day and with the captured reports and POW statements pertaining to drafted Okinawans for labor and service the figure of 68,000 rose to approximately 80,000. It was further estimated that the strength of the forces would be disposed in the southern half of the island.

From: Commander, Fast Carrier Task Force (CTF-58) (Strategic Striking and Covering Force)

TF 58, under the command of Vice Admiral Mitscher, supported the amphibious forces in occupying and capturing Okinawa and adjacent islands.

TF 58 task organization: 9 CV, 6 CVE, 8 BB, 11 CB, 1 CA, 3 CL, 42 DD.

From: Commander, Amphibious Forces (Joint Expeditionary Forces)

The Joint Expeditionary Force (TF 51) comprised the following major units:

(a) Expeditionary Troops (TF 56), Lt. Gen. S. B. Buckner, Jr., USA, commanding the Tenth Army, included the assault troops and assigned garrison troops required for the capture, occupation, defense, and development of the objective. The assault forces were the Northern Landing Force (TG 56.2), Major General Geiger, USMC, commanding, composed of the III Amphibious Corps consisting of the First Marine Division (Major General del Valle, USMC), and the Sixth Marine Division (Maj. Gen. L. C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC); the Southern Landing Force (TG 56.3) Major General Hodge, USA, commanding, composed of the XXIV Army Corps consisting of the Seventh Infantry Division (Major General Arnold, USA) and the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division (Major General Bradley, USA); the Western Island Landing Force (TG 56.4) Major General Bruce, USA, commanding, and consisting of the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division; Demonstration Landing Force (TG 56.5), Major Gen-

eral Watson, USMC, commanding, and consisting of the Second Marine Division; Expeditionary Force Floating Reserve (TG 56.6) Major General Griner, USA, commanding, and consisting of the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division; Area Reserve (TG 56.7) Major General Meuller, USA, commanding, and consisting of the Eighty-first Infantry Division was to be assigned to Tenth Army of the Eighty-first Infantry Division was to be assigned to Tenth Army by CincPOA if needed. As commander, Ryukyu Forces (TF 99), composed of naval forces, tactical air force, and island commands assigned, the commanding general Tenth Army, was also responsible for the development of bases, their defense and the administration of civil affairs in the Ryukyu area.

(b) The Amphibious Support Force (TF 52) Rear Admiral W. H. B. Blandy, USN, commanding, consisting of a Support Carrier Group, Air Support Control Unit, Mine Flotilla, Underwater Demolition Flotilla, Gunboat Support Flotilla, Mortar Support Flotilla executed gunfire and air support, minesweeping, and underwater demolitions in support of the operation. Upon arrival of commander, TF 51 at the objective on Love-day, Vice Admiral Turner assumed command of TF 52, Rear Admiral Blandy assumed command of Fire Support and Air Units in the southeastern area of Okinawa as CTG 51.19 until relieved by Rear Admiral Fahrion who assumed additional duties as SOPA Eastern Okinawa as of Love-plus-17 day.

(c) Gunfire and Covering Force (TF 54), Rear Admiral Deyo, USN, commanding, until relieved by Rear Admiral Smith, USN, on 4 May comprising the fire-support ships assigned, supported all landings, provided continuous reinforcement to the ground forces throughout the operation, engaged in small boat countermeasures and insured cover for the task force in the vicinity of the objective against hostile surface attack.

(d) The Northern Attack Force (TF 53), Rear Admiral Reifsnider, USN, commanding, comprising an Air Support Control Unit, Two Transport Squadrons, Tractor Flotilla, Control Group, Beach Party Group, Attack Force Screen, Defense and Garrison Group, transported and landed the III Amphibious Corps over the northern Hagushi beaches on Okinawa. TF 53 was dissolved on

NARRATIVE

Love+17-day and Rear Admiral Reifsnider became SOPA Ie Shima (CTG 51.21).

(e) The Southern Attack Force (TF 55), Rear Admiral Hall, USN, commanding, was organized similarly to the Northern Attack Force with the addition of an LCT and Pontoon Group and Port Director Group. TF 55 transported and landed the XXIV Army Corps over the southern Hagushi beaches on Okinawa. Rear Admiral Hall was also in over-all command of both attack forces for the landing of reserves and Garrison forces. TF 55 was dissolved on Love+17-day and Rear Admiral Hall became SOPA Hagushi (TG 51.22).

(f) The Western Island Attack Group (TG 51.1), Rear Admiral Kiland, USN, commanding, comprising an Air Support Control Unit, one TransRon, Tractor Flotilla, Assault Tractor Group, Reserve Tractor Group, LSM Group, and Control Unit, Beach Party Unit and Screen transported and landed the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division on Kerama Retto, and field artillery units on Keise Shima. TG 51.1 was dissolved on Love+1-day and Rear Admiral Kiland became SOPA, Kerama Retto (TG 51.15).

(g) Demonstration Group (TG 51.2), Rear Admiral Wright, USN, commanding, and consisting of an Air Support Control Unit, One TransRon, Tractor Flotilla, Control Unit and Screen transported the Second Marine Division plus Army reserves, and after executing diversionary feints on the Southeast coast of Okinawa and landing Army Reserve Units over designated beaches, retired with the Second Marine Division to Saipan. TG 51.2 was dissolved upon arrival at Saipan.

(h) Area Reserve (TG 51.4), Commodore Loomis, USN, commanding, consisting of one TransRon, Landing Craft Unit, and Area Reserve Screen was available and standing by to load, transport and land the Thirty-first Infantry Division, but this division was not released by CinCPac as it was not necessary to the operation.

Ships employed in the operation.

A total of 1,213 ships listed as to type in the table below were employed by TF 51. The list includes assault shipping and ships of the first garrison echelon but does not include ships from other forces which operated temporarily under senior officers present afloat at the objective.

Summary of ships employed

Type	Number	Type	Number	Type	Number	Type	Number
AGC	8	ARG	1	CVE	18	LSM	111
AK	1	ARL	3	DD	82	LSV	5
AKA	53	ARS	1	DE	54	LST	187
AKN	4	ATF	6	DM	14	OBG	18
AM	42	ATR	2	DMS	13	PC	16
AN	12	AV	3	IX	1	PCF	7
AP	3	AVD	3	LCL	134	PCS	17
APA	128	AVP	4	LCL(L)	6	PGM	6
APD	36	CA	8	LCS(L3)	42	SC	33
APH	2	CL	4	LCT	67	XAK	7
ARB	1	CM	3	LSD	6	XAP	3
						YMS	40
						Total ships	1,213

Ground forces committed

The following table lists the troops employed for phases I and II of the operation. Figures include the Second Marine Division which was at the objective but did not land during these phases.

Summary of expeditionary troops employed

	Assault troops			Garrison troops			Total
	Army	Ma-rine	Navy	Army	Ma-rine	Navy	
Landing force	98,567	81,165	2,380				182,112
Garrison force				182,137	8,310	79,307	269,754
Net total troops employed	98,567	81,165	2,380	182,137	8,310	79,307	451,866

Principal Strategic Features of the Operation

The Joint Chiefs of Staff directed the capture of one or more localities in the Mansei Shoto as a phase in the general objective of the armed forces of the United States in the Western Pacific. The Joint Expeditionary Force (Amphibious Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet) as part of the Fifth Fleet was assigned the mission for the capture, occupation and defense of the Okinawa Gunto. The Fifth Fleet was assisted by other forces under the control of the commander in chief, Pacific Ocean area, the commander in chief, Southwest Pacific area, the Twentieth Bomber Command, and a British carrier task force. The strategy employed in this operation may be described as follows:

(a) The west coast of the United States, Hawaiian Islands, Marianas, Marshals, Carolines, and Leyte in the Philippines served as bases for

the operation, and provided the necessary protection for sea and airlines of communication.

(b) The Amphibious Support Force and Gunfire and Covering Force, commencing Love-7-day with naval gunfire and air bombardment, struck Okinawa and the satellite islands of the Kerama group to soften the enemy defenses, to destroy his aircraft, neutralize his airfields, sweep clear the waters of mines, and provide cover and protection against hostile surface and air units so as to insure the safe and uninterrupted approach of the attack force and subsequent landing of the expeditionary troops. These forces continued this function throughout the course of the operation.

(c) The Fast Carrier Force struck the Empire, Formosa, the Sakishima Gunto and Okinawa Gunto prior to Love-day to destroy enemy aircraft and air installations and to soften up enemy defense which might interfere with the Okinawa operations. This force later provided air cover and direct support at Okinawa and covered the front and flanks against hostile and potential surface attack by strikes on the Empire and by destruction of a hostile surface task force.

(d) A British carrier task force operating under, and in conjunction with the Fifth Fleet, assisted in the neutralization of Formosa and the Sakishima Gunto and covered the western flank against hostile surface and aircraft.

(e) Search planes based at Kerama Retto and Okinawa supported the operations through air reconnaissance of the East China Sea and attacked hostile shipping and aircraft, while other aircraft conducted ASP, air-sea rescue and photo reconnaissance.

(f) The Strategic Air Force, Pacific Ocean Area, operating from bases in the Marianas struck Okinawa Gunto from time to time prior to Love-day for the purpose of softening up the enemy, destroying his aircraft, neutralizing his fields, destroying his shipping and further engaged in photo reconnaissance and air-sea rescue. With the capture of Iwo Jima, aircraft based on that island carried out strikes on the Empire in accordance with the general softening up plan and provided cover and protection against hostile surface and aircraft on the eastern flank.

(g) The Twenty-first Bomber Command of the Twentieth Air Force, operating from bases in the

Marianas, contributed to the general softening up plan by strikes on the Empire, coordinating its strikes with those of the fast carriers and increased the frequency and strength of its strikes on the airfields and installations on Kyushu to neutralize and destroy those installations in order to minimize the employment of hostile aircraft against our forces at Okinawa.

(h) The Submarine Force Pacific Fleet carried out reconnaissance, attacked enemy shipping, engaged in life-guard service, conducted photo missions and provided weather reports.

(i) Okinawa and its satellite islands provided facilities for the establishment of a logistics and seaplane base, air warning and fighter-director stations and airfields, enabling early employment of land-based aircraft, all of which were utilized concurrently with the action of ground troops in the assault and occupation phase of the operation.

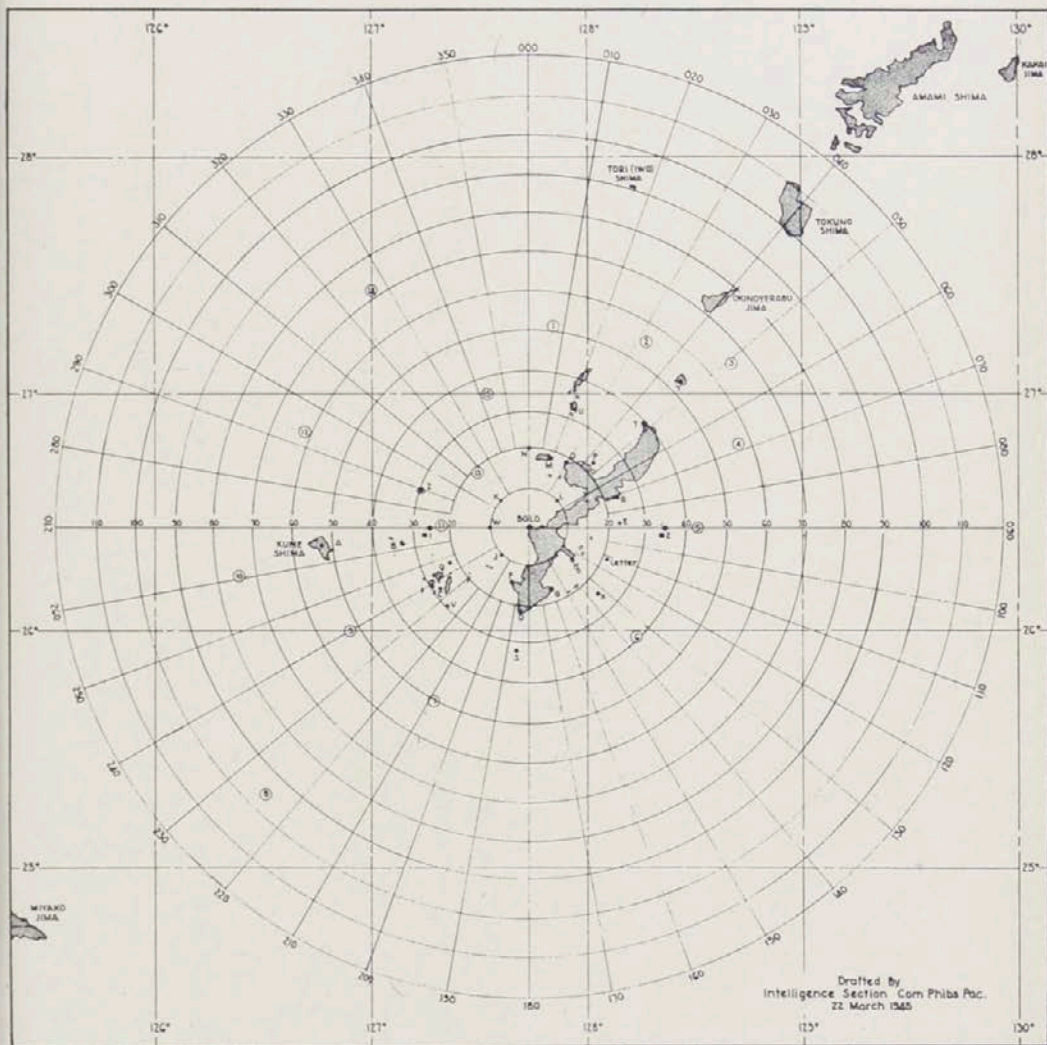
The amphibious operations for the capture of Okinawa Gunto in terms of ships employed, naval gunfire delivered, naval air support conducted, and the magnitude of the logistic problems and distances involved may well be considered the largest single naval operation in the history of Pacific Ocean warfare. The capture of Okinawa Gunto with its potential base development will serve to further support the future operations in the China Sea, act as a springboard for attack on the main islands of Japan, and will serve as a base from which to sever the Japanese sea and air communications between the Asiatic mainland, Formosa, Malaya, and the East Indies.

From: Commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific

At How -35, CTF 53 and CTF 55 assumed control of fires within the zones of action of the III PhibCorps and the XXIV Army Corps respectively. Thereafter, the gunfire duties of CTF 51 consisted of coordinating replenishment, allocating fire support ships to CTF 53, CTF 55, and CTG 51.19, and in scheduling deep supporting fires in the zone of action of the Tenth Army. On 18 April, TF's 53 and 55 were dissolved and, without change of fire-support responsibilities became TG 51.21 and TG 51.22 respectively.

The employment of one or more Amphibious Group commanders each embarked in an AGC to control preassault bombardment should be continued. Since he is provided with an adequate

RADAR REFERENCE PLOTTING CHART
CHART NO. 1 TO SECTION (E) OF PART (V)
COMPHIBSPAC ACTION REPORT
OKINAWA GUNTO
PHASES I AND II



Drafted By
Intelligence Section Com Phibs Pac.
22 March 1945



staff and with proper communication and intelligence facilities, he can ensure that the naval bombardment prior to Love-day achieves maximum efficiency.

The employment of an Amphibious Support Force, headed by an Amphibious Group commander embarked in an AGC, should be continued. The resulting provision of an adequate staff with proper communication and intelligence facilities ensures that the naval bombardment prior to Dog-day will achieve maximum efficiency.

TF 54: A new feature in this operation was the composition and function of TF 54, the Gunfire and Covering Force. This Task Force organization had been used first at Iwo Jima but at Okinawa a somewhat different procedure was used. The ships assigned to TF 54 constituted a permanent organization whose functions were:

(a) To compose the covering force for enemy surface action.

(b) To supply fire support ships as required.

Ships once assigned to TF 54 remained assigned and were not rotated with the screen or with other duties. Periodic readjustments were made however to reconcile the composition of the force with other requirements. Initially TF 54 was composed of 10 OBB's, 10 CA's, 2 CL's, and 27 DD's. At the end of the period covered by this report (17 May) TF 54 consisted of 4 OBB's, 5 CA's, 2 CL's, 13 DD's. CTF 54 coordinated and conducted night deployment of the fire-support ships not given night-firing assignments, and coordinated fuel replenishment and provisioning.

After the troop-support program became established and settled into a more or less routine pattern, it was found advisable on 27 April to subdivide TF 54 into various components as follows:

TG 54.1 included all ships assigned to deliver fire support from the western side of Okinawa under the direction of CTG 51.22.

TG 54.2 included all ships not assigned fire support missions, whether at anchor or acting as a covering force.

TG 54.3 included all fire support ship en route to, from, or at Kerama Retto for repairs or replenishment.

TG 51.19 included (on a 24-hour basis) ships for delivery of fire support from the eastern side of Okinawa.

A commander was designated for each group whose responsibility was the coordination and control of the movements and actions of the group in fulfilling the basic mission. The advantages secured by the utilization of TF 54 as the basic fire-support organization are as follows:

(a) Ships assigned to fire-support duty continued in that duty, with the consequent benefit of terrain familiarity, navigational knowledge, familiarity with the communications plan, and up-to-date information on troop locations and objectives.

(b) Target destruction became a continuing program, in place of the former situation in which a ship fired one day at a given target, and that target then went without fire until later located by or specifically assigned to another ship.

(c) Better control of fire-support ships was secured by assignment to subgroups of TF 54, and few instances of mutual interference or fouling of lines of fire were reported.

(d) Dissemination of new maps and current intelligence was greatly simplified due to the necessity of distributing only to a relatively small and unchanging group of ships.

(e) General instructions could easily be given all fire-support ships by the relatively simple medium of a coded despatch to TF 54.

**From: Commander, FIFTH Amphibious Force
(CTF 31 and CTF 51)**

Fire support ships of TF 32 were at all times assigned to one of the follow task groups: Western Fire Support Group, Covering and Standby Fire Support Group, Logistics Group, and Eastern Fire Support Group. CTG 51/31 made assignments to these groups twice daily (night assignments on the preceding morning and day assignments on the preceding evening) based on the number of ships available for fire support and the request received from the troops ashore. After the ships were assigned respective groups, the command in control of close support fire made direct assignments of ships to specific units ashore:

Fire-support requirements from 17 May until 8 June averaged eight heavy ships and six de-

destroyers. Commencing on the night of June 8-9 only destroyers were used for fire support at night due the limited operating area remaining for the fire-support ships. While the heavy ships were available if needed, they were brought into the anchorage at night to avoid needless exposure to torpedo plane or suicide plane attack. From June 8 until June 20 an average of seven heavy ships and four destroyers were used for fire support during the day, and nine destroyers were used during the night. On June 20 only one battleship and one destroyer were used for fire support during the day. After the island was secured on June 21, destroyers were kept on standby at night to furnish emergency illumination until major mopping up operations were completed on June 26.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 4.

Organization of the Northern Attack Force (TF 53) Love-day, 1 April 1945, for the attack on Okinawa.

53 Northern Attack Force—Rear Admiral Reifsnider.

(a) Force Flagship, *Panamint* (AGC-13)—Captain Woods: 1 AGC.

(b) 53.10 Northern Air Support Control Unit—Commander Perkins.

(c) 56.2 Northern Landing Force—Major General Geiger, USMC.

III Amphibious Corps (reinforced);

Corps Troops, plus attached units;

Sixth Marine Division, plus attached units;

First Marine Division, plus attached units;

Less detachments to Tenth Army; plus

Tenth Army troops assigned.

(d) 53.1 *Transport Group Able* (*TransRon 12*)—Commodore Knowles: 16 APA's, 6 AKA's, 1 LSD, 1 LSV.

56.2.1 *Landing Group Able*—Major General Shepherd, USMC: Sixth Marine Division, plus attached units corps, Tenth Army, and garrison troops assigned.

(e) 53.2 *Transport Group Baker* (*TransRon 18*)—Commodore Moyer: 15 APA's, 6 AKA's, 2 LSD's, 1 LSV.

56.2.2 *Landing Group Baker*—Major General Del Valle, USMC: First Division, plus attached units corps, Tenth Army and garrison troops assigned.

(f) 53.3 *Northern Tractor Flotilla*—Captain Laidlaw.

53.3.2 *Tractor Group Baker*—Captain Laidlaw: 1 LC (FF), 16 LST's.

53.3.1 *Tractor Group Able*—Commander Ageton: 1 LC (FF), 16 LST's, 7 LSM's.

53.3.3 *Tractor Group Charlie*—Captain Watts: 1 LC (FF), 14 LST's, 8 LSM's, 1 LST.

(g) 53.4 *Northern Control Group*—Captain Coleman: 1 PCE, 5 PCS, 4 PC, 8 SC.

(h) 53.5 *Northern Beach Party Group*—Lieutenant Commander Nelson: 6 TransDiv Beach Parties, 1 SC.

(i) 53.7 *Northern Defense Group*—Captain Weeden: 1 LC (FF), 21 LST's, 2 IX, 2 SC.

(j) 53.8 *Northern Garrison Group*—Captain MacGowan: 1 AP, 1 APA, 2 XAP, 5 XAK, 1 LSV, 2 CM, 4 DE.

(k) 54.1.4 *Fire Support Unit Four*—(Control passed to CTF 53 at H-35): 2 OBB, 2 CA, 1 CF, 5 DD.

(l) 54.1.5 *Fire Support Unit Five*—(Control passed to CTF 53 at H-35): 2 OBB, 2 CA, 5 DD.

(m) 53.11 *Northern Support Craft*: 6 LCI(G), 18 LCI(R), 6 LSM(R), 12 LCS(L), 16 LCI(M).

(n) 53.12 *Northern Small Craft Group*—Captain Peterson: 3 LSD, 1 LST(M).

53.12.2 *Northern LCT Unit*—Lieutenant Commander Gillette: 30 LCT, 1 LC(FF).

53.12.3 *Northern Pontoon Barge Unit*—Lieutenant Jamin:

Transport Group Able Pontoon Barge Unit—Lieutenant Dorfman, 25 barges.

Transport Group Baker Pontoon Barge Unit—Lieutenant (jg) Von Frellick, 23 barges.

53.12.4 *Northern Pontoon Causeway Unit*—Lieutenant Wallace (headquarters in SC 630 until transfer ashore).

53.12.5 *Transport Group Able Small Boat Unit*—Officer assigned by ComTransRon Able (headquarters in Casa Grande); small boats assigned.

53.12.6 *Transport Group Baker Small Boat Unit*—Officer assigned by ComTransRon Baker (headquarters in White Marsh); small boats assigned.

(o) 51.18.5 Northern Boat Control Unit—Lieutenant Commander Nelson: 12 LVT, 12 LCV(P). Landing Boat Unit One—Lieutenant (jg) Dann.

Totals			
Type	No.	Type	No.
AGC	1	XAPs	2
APAs	32	XAKs	5
AKAs	12	IXs	2
LSDs	6	SCs	12
LSVs	3	CMs	2
LC(FF)	5	DEs	4
LSTs	68	DDs	10
LSMs	15	CAs	4
LSM(R)s	6	CLs	1
PCs	4	OBBS	4
PCSs	5	LCS(L)s	12
PCE	1	LCI(M)s	16
APs	1	LCI(R)s	18
LST(M)	1	LCI(G)s	6
LCTs	30	LVTs	12
LSV(P)s	12	Barges	48
Total ships	366 less 48 barges.		

Landing force..... III Amphibious Corps (reinforced) corps troops, plus attached units 6th Marine Division, plus attached units 1st Marine Division, plus attached units less detachments to Tenth Army; plus 10th Army troops assigned.

Landing group..... 6th Marine Division, plus attached units corps, Tenth Army, and garrison troops assigned.

Landing group..... 1st Division, plus attached units corps, 10th Army and garrison troops assigned.

Northern Landing Force (TG 56.2)

The Northern Landing Force consisted of the III Amphibious Corps commanded by Maj. Gen. Roy S. Gieger, USMC. Two Marine divisions (reinforced) were assigned to the corps, the 1st Marine Division (reinforced) and the 6th Marine Division (reinforced). The 1st Marine Division (reinforced) commanded by Maj. Gen. P. A. del Valle, USMC, was composed of RCT 1, RCT 5, RCT 7, Division Artillery (11th Marines), and attached units. The 6th Marine Division (reinforced) (less RCT 29), commanded by Maj. Gen. I. C. Shepard, Jr., USMC, comprised RCT 4, RCT 22, Division Artillery (15th Marines) and attached units. Supporting the two attacking divisions were the corps artillery, antiaircraft artillery, corps reserve (RCT 29) and corps troops.

Additional Units: 2 SC, 2 PCE(R).

Organization of the Ie Shima Attack Group (TG 51.21) as of 0800 Item, William-day, 16 April 1945 (ComPhibGrp 4 Attack Plan A406-45).

51.21 Ie Shima Attack Group—Rear Admiral Reifsnider: 1 AGC.

(a) Group Flagship, *Panamint*—Captain Woods.

(b) 53.10 Air Support Control Unit: Commander Perkins.

(c) 56.4 Ie Shima Landing Force: Major General Bruce, USA.:

Seventy-seventh Army Division, plus attached units. 1 FMF Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion.

(d) 51.1.1 *TransRon 17*—Commodore Brittain: 11 APAs, 5 AKAs, 1 APH, 2 APD, 1 APH.

(e) 51.1.6 *Tractor Flotilla*—Capt. Webb: 16 LSTs, 2 LST(H), 1 LC(FF).

51.1.9 *Reserve Tractor Group*—Commander Anderson: 11 LST, 5 LSM, 1 LC(FF).

(f) 53.4 *Control Group*—Captain Coleman: 53.4.1 *Central Control Unit*—Captain Coleman:

5 SC, 2 PC, 1 PCE, 1 PCS.

(g) 53.5 *Beach Party Group*—Lieutenant Commander Nelson:

1 SC, 3 *TransRon*, 17 Beach Parties—Lieutenant Commander Lent.

(h) 51.5 *Transport Screen*—Captain Moosbrugger, as assigned.

(i) 51.21.1 *Gunfire Support Group*—Rear Admiral Rodgers:

2 OBB, 2 CA, 2 CL, 7 DD.

(j) 51.21 *Support Craft*—Captain Rimer: 1 LC(FF), 17 LCI(M), 10 LCI(G), 3 LCI(M).

(k) 51.21.3 *Underwater Demolition Unit*—Captain Williams:

2 APD, 4 DD, 3 DD.

51.21.34 *Fast Transport Unit*—Captain Williams: 2 APD.

(l) 51.17 *Hydrographic Survey Group*—Commander Saunders: 1 PCS(H).

(m) 51.21.4 *Service and Salvage Unit*—1 ATF.

(n) 51.21.5 *LCT and Pontoon Barge Unit*: Warping Tugs No. 1 and No. 8 Barges and LCT's as assigned.

(o) 51.21.6 *Pontoon Causeway Unit* (under Operational Control)—2 LST(of CFU 51.1.6).

COMMAND AND ORGANIZATION

- (p) 51.21.7 *Boat Patrol Unit*—Lieutenant Commander R. R. Nelson: 12 landing boats as assigned by CTR 17.
- 51.21 *LSM(R) Group* (temp.)—Commander Francis (operating with Gunfire Support Group): 1 LC(FF), 6 LSM(R).
- 52.24.2 *Mortar Support Division Six* (Temp.) (operating off Sesoka Jima): 4 LCI(M).

Ie Shima Landing Force (TG 56.4)

The Ie Shima landing force consisted of the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division (reinforced) (USA) commanded by Major General A. D. Bruce, USA. This force was composed of RCT 305 (Second Battalion), RCT 306, RCT 307, division artillery, and attached units. Four Field Artillery battalions made up the division artillery, the Three Hundred and Fourth, Three Hundred and Fifth, Nine Hundred and Second (all armed with 105-mm. howitzers) and the Three Hundred and Sixth (armed with the 155-mm. howitzers).

Type	Totals		No.
	No.	Type	
AGC	1	PCE	1
APA	11	PCS	1
AKA	5	OB	2
APH	2	CA	2
LST	29	CL	2
LST(H)	2	DD	14
LC(FF)	4	LCI(M)	24
APD	6	LCI(G)	10
LSM	5	ATF	1
LSM(R)	6	Total number of	
PCS(H)	1	ships	137
SC	6	Plus landing boats	12
PC	2		

Ground Forces Committed

RCT 305 (Second Battalion), RCT 306, RCT 307, division artillery, Seventy-seventh Army Division, plus attached units. Four field artillery battalions made up the division artillery, the Three Hundred and Fourth, Three Hundred and Fifth, Nine Hundred and Second and the Three Hundred and Sixth.

One FMF amphibious reconnaissance battalion.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 12 (CTF 55) (Southern Attack Force)

This report covers the operations of TF 55 and TC's 51.22 and 31.22, all of which were commanded successively by Rear Admiral J. L. Hall, Jr.,

USN, commander, Amphibious Group 12, during the capture of Okinawa Jima.

It includes the period from March 14, 1945, at which time TF 55 (Southern Attack Force) commenced rehearsal for the assault, until June 9, 1945, when Rear Admiral Hall and certain members of his staff left Okinawa and proceeded to Manila by air.

TF 55 (Southern Attack Force) was composed of the following groups:

- (a) Force Flagship, *Teton*—Captain Tallman, USN, commanding.
- (b) 55.10 *Air Support Control Unit*—Capt. M. F. Leslie, USN, commanding.
- (c) 56.3 *Landing Force*—Maj. Gen. J. R. Hodge, USA, commanding, composed of the XXIV Corps less the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division. It included the Seventh Infantry Division, Maj. Gen. A. V. Arnold, USA, and the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division, Major General Bradley, USA.
- (d) 55.1 *Transport Group DOG* (TransRon 13)—Commodore Carlson, USN.
- (e) 55.2 *Transport Group EASY* (TransRon 14)—Commodore C. G. Richardson, USN, Commanding, second in command Southern Attack Force.
- (f) 55.3 *Southern Tractor Flotilla*—Captain Brereton, USN; 49 LST's, 28 LSM's, 6 LCI(FF)'s.
- (g) 55.4 *Southern Control Group*—Captain Adell, USN; 4 PC's, 6 PCS's, 8 SC's.
- (h) 55.5 *Southern Beach Party Group*—Commander L. C. Leever, USNR, Transport beach parties, Garrison Beach Battalion No. 1, and Garrison Beach Battalion No. 2.
- (i) 55.6 *Southern Attack Force Screen*—Captain Young, USN; 16 DD's, 4 DE's, 3 APD's.
- (j) 55.7 *Southern Defense Group*—Commander Zelenka, USN; 25 LST's, 14 LSM's, 1 IX, 1 ARB, 1 AO, 2 LCI (L)'s, 1 DE, 1 APD, 6 YMS.
- (k) 55.8 *Southern Garrison Group*—Captain Townsend, USN; 5 APA's, 1 AP, 1 XAP, 5 AKA's, 1 AK, 2 XAK's, 6 APD's, 1 CGC.
- (l) 55.9 *LCT and Pontoon Barge Group*—Commander Benline, CEC, USNR; 67 LCT's, 50 LCM's, 40 LCM(3)'s, 55 LCVP's, 4 LCI(R)-(RCM)'s, 2 LCI(FF)'s, 3 LST(M)'s, 4 LCP(R)

NARRATIVE

or (L)'s, 2 ARL's, 52 3 by 12 barges (modified ramp), 10 3 by 12 barges (standard bow), 36 3 by 7 barges.

(m) 55.11 *Southern Support Craft*—Captain Aylward, USN: 5 LCI(FF)'s, 12 LCI(G)'s, 12 LCS(L)'s, 12 LCI(R) (RCM)'s, 6 LSM(R)'s, 18 LCI(M)'s.

(n) 55.12 *Port Director Group*—Lieutenant Commander Huntington, USNR: 4 LCI(R)-(RCM)'s, 2 LCI(L)'s.

(o) 51.13.22 *Underwater Demolition Unit Sugar*—Lieutenant Commander Carberry, USNR: 3 APD's, 3 UDT's.

(p) 51.16 *Pontoon Causeway Group*—Commander Husband, CEC, USNR: 2 LCI(R) (RCM)'s, 26 causeway set.

The total comes to 371 ships, classified as to type in the table below. This list does not include the ships of the Southern Garrison Group, which never sailed as a unit, nor ships which came under control of commander, TF 55, after arrival at the objective.

Type	No.	Type	No.
AGC	1	LSD	3
AKA	13	LST	74
AO	1	LST (H)	3
APA	32	LST (M)	3
APD	7	LSM	29
ARB	1	LSM (R)	6
ARL	2	LSV	1
DD	16	PC	4
DE	5	PCE	1
LCI (FF)	13	PCE (R)	1
LCI (L)	2	PCS	6
LCI (R) (RCM)	22	SC	9
LCI (G)	12	YMS	6
LCI (M)	18	IX	1
LCS (L)	12		
LCT	66	Total ships	371
LCT(Salvage)	1		

Ground Forces Committed

7th Division	21,730
96th Division	21,521
Corps Troops	12,465
Total	55,716

The Southern Attack Force was one of the two attack forces organized to assault the Hagushi beaches, western Okinawa. The other was the Northern Attack Force, commanded by Rear Admiral L. F. Reifsnider, USN, lifting the First and Sixth Marine Divisions of the III Amphibious

Corps. The common task assigned these two attack forces by Vice Admiral R. K. Turner, USN, commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, was

“(f) Northern Attack Force

“(g) Southern Attack Force, under over-all command of commander, Southern Attack Force, land Northern and Southern Landing Forces, Army reserves, and garrison force on designated beaches on western Okinawa north and south of Hagushi as indicated in Annex (E) (1), Preferred Plan, or land on eastern Okinawa as indicated in Annex (E) (5) and (6), Alternate Plan. Control operations of assigned gunfire vessels and aircraft delivering supporting fire in corps zones beginning at How-35. Control operations of Underwater Demolition Flotilla on respective beaches subsequent to arrival of transports in transport area, and complete clearance of beach obstacles as necessary. Obtain assistance for salvage and fire fighting from CTG 51.6. Prior departure from final staging points transfer designated assault troops, and advance groups of beach and shore parties to LST's, and transfer designated control personnel to control vessels. On Love-day transfer remaining control personnel aboard transports to control craft. On arrival of Tractor groups at objectives, destroyers, and destroyer escorts assigned to these groups report to commander, Transport Screen. When unloaded about Love+2-day, CTF 55 designate 28 LST's to return to Saipan for loading construction battalions and Army Engineer construction groups. Establish boat pools in accordance with Annex (L); direct 4 LCVP to report to SOPA at 1200 (I) Love-day for use for press service in accordance with Annex (O). Allocate LCT's and pontoon barges to TF's 53, 55, SOPA, Kerama Retto, and garrison and supply vessels for discharge of cargo. Supervise Port Director Group in assignment of anchorages and control of movements of ships in west coast anchorages and harbors. Upon completion of the capture of the position, or when directed by CTF 51, reembark troops not required for subsequent operation or for the garrison force for transfer to rear areas. Inform CTF 51 daily, by noon,

the names of ships and craft designated to remain at the objective that night. Order night retirements in accordance with Annex (K). Provide landing craft, boats, and barges for the ammunition boat pool at Hagushi as required by Annex (L)." (The above quoted from ComPhibsPac Op-Plan A1-45.)

That wherever possible a battleship or cruiser division commander should exercise control as fire support group commander under the attack force or group commander controlling fire. These two commands should work interdependently, with assignment of missions, targets, shore fire-control parties, airspot, and all matters concerning ground support under the cognizance of the attack force commander; protection of ships and assignment of individual firing stations (within requirements of tasks assigned previously by attack force commander) under the cognizance of the fire support commander.

**From: Commander, Amphibious Group 7
(Western Island Attack Group CTG-51.1)**

Composition of TG 51.1:

- 51.1 *Western Islands Attack Group*—Rear Admiral Kiland.
- (a) *Group flagship*, Captain Gamet—*Mount McKinley* (AGC 7): 1 AGC.
- (b) 51.1.10 *Air Support Control Unit*—Commander Buckley.
- (c) 56.4 *Western Islands Landing Force*—Major General Bruce, USA: (From Army troops) Seventh-seventy Infantry Division, plus attached units; 1 amphibious reconnaissance battalion, less Company "B" (From fleet Marine forces).
- (d) 51.1.1 *TransRon 17*: 13 APA, 5 AKA, 1 APH, 2 APD.
- (e) 51.1.6 *Western Islands Tractor Flotilla*—Captain Webb: 2 LCI(FF), 11 LSM, 28 LST.
- (f) 51.1.11 *Western Islands Control Unit*—Lieutenant Baker: 1 PCE, 2 PC, 4 SC, 1 PCS.
- (g) 51.1.12 *Western Island Beach Party Unit*—Lieutenant Commander Lunt: 4 TransDiv Beach Parties, 1 SC, 1 PCE(R).
- (h) 52.12 *Underwater Demolition Group Able* (upon reporting at the objective)—Commander Horner: 4 UDT, 5 APD, 4 LCP(R).

- (i) 51.1.15 *Western Islands Fire Support Unit* (as assigned by CTF 52)—Senior Officer: 1 CA, 1 CL, 1 DD.
- (j) 51.1.16 *Western Islands Support Craft Flotilla* (as assigned from TG 52.15) (Com LCI Flot 14)—Captain Rimmer: 3 LCI(FF), 1 LCI(M), 5 LCI(R) (RCM), 23 LCI(G), 12 LSM(R).
- (k) 51.5 *Transport Screen*—Captain Moosbrugger: 1 AGC.
- (l) 51.1.13 *Western Islands Attack Group*—Captain Moosbrugger: 8 DD, 6 DE, 3 APD.

NOTE: DD's as assigned will be interchanged with DD's of TF 54 Gunfire and Covering Force, as required by ammunition situation.

Plus craft assigned from TU 51.1.11 when not required for control duties.

Plus craft assigned from Western Islands Support Craft Group when not required by other duties.

Screen will be supplemented by minesweepers assigned by CTF 52 from Mine Flotilla during darkness and when not required for minesweeping operations.

- (m) 52.8 *Net and Buoy Group*—Lieutenant Commander King: 1 CM, 6 AN, 1 AKN.
 - (n) 51.20 *Seaplane Base Group*—Captain McLean: 3 AV, 4 AVP, 3 AVD.
 - (o) 51.17 *Hydrographic Survey Unit*—Lieutenant Woodke: 2 PCS(H).
 - (p) 51.6 *Service and Salvage Unit*—Captain Curtis: 1 ARS, 2 ATF, 1 ARL, 2 LCI(L) (Sal), 1 LCT (Sal).
 - (q) 51.1.17 *Western Islands Ponton Barge and Causeway Unit*—Lieutenant Zeigler: 7 causeways, 8 warping tugs, 4 barges.
 - (r) 51.1.18 *LCT Group*—Lieutenant Carncross: 18 LCT, 1 LST.
 - (s) 51.1.19 *Kerama Retto Boat Pool*—Lieutenant Commander Pardee: 1 LST(M), 1 ARL, 1 LSD.
 - (t) 52.6.5 *Mine Investigation and Disposal Unit*—Commander Clay: 1 DM, 2 YMS, 1 PGM.
 - (u) 52.7.4 *Sweep Unit Nineteen*—Commander McEathron: 5 AM.
- TG 51.1 *Western Islands Attack Group*—Rear Admiral Kiland.

(a) 51.1.1 *Transport Group Fox*—Rear Admiral Kiland: *Mt. McKinley* (AGC 7) (F)—Captain Gamet: 1 AGC.

51.1.21 *TransRon 17*: 13 APA, 5 AKA, 1 APH.

(b) 51.1.13 *Transport Group Fox Screen*—Captain Moosbrugger: *Biscayne* (AGC 16) (F), 1 AGC, 6 DD, 4 DE, 6 APD, 6 UDT, 1 ARS, 1 ATF, 1 PCE (R).

(c) 51.1.2 *Support Carrier Unit Four*—Rear Admiral Stump: CarDiv 24—3 CVE, 2 DD, 5 DE.

(d) 51.7.1 *Western Islands Tractor Group George*—Captain Webb: 4 LCI(FF); 18 LCI(G), 12 LSM(R), 2 LSM, 11 LCI(M), 5 LCI(R)(RCM) 6 AN, 2 AKN, 20 LST, 1 LST(M), 1 LST (BRADIE), 1 ARL.

(e) 51.7 *Western Islands Tractor Group George Screen*—Commander Hubbard: 1 DD, 2 DE, 3 AM, 4 APD, 2 PC, 1 PCE, 1 PCS, 2 PCS(H), 5 SC, 1 ATF, 2 LCI(L) (Salvage).

(f) 51.7.9 *Western Islands Tractor Group How*—Commander McEathron: 7 LST, 1 LCI(FF), 9 LSM.

(g) 51.7.10 *Western Islands Tractor Group How Screen*—Commander McEathron: 1 DD, 2 AM, 3 APD.

The location of Kerama Retto, in close proximity to Okinawa, the main objective, lent itself admirably to the plan to establish and develop there a base for logistic support of the Joint Expeditionary Force and a seaplane base from which search and A/S patrol planes could effectively operate. The idea of capturing these islands, and having the base actively functioning as such before the main assault was a bold conception.

The period of preparation required to accomplish mine sweeping, amphibious reconnaissance and shore bombardment for the Okinawa operation amounted to 8 days. The ability to replenish fuel and ammunition expended from sources so near the objective amounted to a most effective increase in the useful hours of the fire support and mine-sweeping craft available.

Apparently the assault on Kerama Retto came as a surprise to the enemy because very little preparation had been made for defense of the islands, and they were held by relatively weak forces. The enemy's intended use of the islands appeared

to have been as a base for suicide boats, with which to attack any naval forces which might assault Okinawa.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 7 (CTG 51.15)

TG 51.15 SOPA Kerama Retto—Rear Admiral Kiland: Vessels assigned, including Kerama Retto screen, logistic ships, seaplane base, and all vessels while obtaining logistics.

(a) 51.15.1 Group Flagship—Captain Gamet: *Mt. McKinley* (AGC 7): 1 AGC.

(b) 51.15.10 *Air Support Control Unit* (embarked in Group Flagship)—Commander Buckley.

(c) 51.15.2 *Kerama Retto Screen*—Lieutenant Commander Bowes (ComMinRon 4): *Hopkins* (DMS 13) (F); destroyers, destroyer escorts, fast transports, minecraft, patrol craft, and other screen types as assigned.

(d) 51.2.9.5 *Kerama Retto Gunboats*—Commander Montgomery (ComLCIFlot 6): LCI (FF) 782 (F)—1 LCI(FF), 6 LCI(R) (RCM), 12 LCI(G).

(e) 51.15.3 *Mine Destruction and Investigation Unit*—Commander Clay: 1 DM, 1 PGM, 4 YMS.

(f) 51.15.4 *Service and Salvage Unit*—Commander Holm: 1 LST, 2 ARL, 3 ARB, 1 LSD, 1 ARS, 2 ATF, 2 LCI (Salvage).

(g) 51.15.5 *Harbor Master Unit*—Commander Walsh: 1 SC.

(h) 51.15.6 *Kerama Retto Boat Pool*—Lieutenant Commander Pardee: 1 LST(M), 20 LCM, 20 LCVP, 2 LCP(R).

51.15.7 *LCT Unit*—Lieutenant Carnoross: 17 LCT.

(i) 51.15.8 *Pontoon Barge and Causeway Unit*—Lieutenant Zeigler: 2 causeways, 1 barge.

(j) 51.8 *Net and Buoy Group*—Commander King: 1 AKN, 6 AN.

(k) 51.20 *Seaplane Base Group*—Captain McLean: 3 AV, 4 AVP, 1 DD, 1 AVD.

(l) 51.17.1 *Hydrographic Survey Unit*—Lieutenant Woodke: 2 PCS(H), 1 AGS.

(m) 51.15.9 *Fueling and Water Unit*—Senior officer: 2 AO, 1 AO, (Water), 1 AOG, 3 IX.

(n) 51.15.11 *Ammunitioning Unit*—Commander Farnsworth (ComLSTGrp 74): 10 LST, 4 LSM.

(o) 51.15.12 *Supply Unit*—Senior officer: 1 IX.

- (p) *Receiving Ship*—CO of ship assigned: 1 APA.
 - (q) *Casualty Unit*—Senior officer: 1 APH, 1 APA, 1 LST(H), 1 PCE(R).
 - (r) *Western Anchorage Control*—Commander MacKinnon: 1 SC.
 - (s) 50.9.5 *ComServRon 10 Representative*—Commander Gembling: 1 AR, 1 AG, 1 ARD.
 - (t) 51.15.13 to 51.15 Return convoys—Each unit under senior officer (convoys sailed to rear area by CTG 51.15, as directed by CTF 51).
- With few exceptions the actual ships and craft assigned were changing almost daily.

From: Commander, Amphibious Group 5 (CTG 51.2 (The Demonstration Group))

- 51.2 *Demonstration Group*—Rear Admiral Wright.
 - (a) Group flagship, *Ancon*—Captain Pearson: 1 AGC.
 - (b) 51.2.10 *Air Support Control Unit*—Commander Dickinson.
 - (c) 56.5 *Demonstration Landing Force* (from Army troops)—Major General Watson, USMC: Second Marine Division, plus attached units.
 - (d) 51.2.1 *TransRon 15*—Commodore Flanagan:
 - 51.2.11 *TransDiv 43*—Commodore Flanagan: 5 APA, 2 AKA, 1 APH.
 - 51.2.12 *TransDiv 44*—Captain Seyfried: 5 APA, 2 AKA, 1 LSV.
 - 51.2.13 *TransDiv 45*—Captain Sabalot: 5 APA, 2 AKA.
 - (e) 51.2.6 *Demonstration Group Tractor Flo-tilla*—Commander Niekum: 1 LCI(FF), Flagship: LCI(FF) 995, 4 LST, 1 LST(M), 6 LST's, 1 LCI(FF), 11 LSM's.
 - (f) 51.2.7 *Demonstration Group Control Unit*—Lieutenant Kuder: 1 PCS, 2 PC, 4 SC.
 - (g) 51.2.8 *Demonstration Group Screen*—Captain Chandler: 7 DD, 2 DE, 2 APD, 2 SC.
 - (h) 51.2.9 *Demonstration Support Craft*—Lieutenant Commander McFadden:
 - 51.2.91 *Support Unit Able*—Lieutenant Commander Brown: 6 LCI(M).
 - 52.24.1 *Mortar Support Division Five*—Lieutenant Commander Brown: 6 LCI(M).
 - 51.2.92 *Support Unit Baker*—Lieutenant Commander McFadden: 6 LCI(G), 6 LCS(L).

- (i) 51.2.19 *Beach Party Group*—Lieutenant Commander Lippincott: 3 Transdiv beach parties.

From: Commander, Cruiser Division 13 (CTF 54)

The composition of TF 54 was as follows:
 CTF 54—Rear Admiral Deyo: 10 BB, 8 CA, 3 CL, 24 DD, 8 DE, 3 AVD.

- Four units were organized as follows:
- 54.1 included the ships on fire-support duties;
 - 54.2 the ships of TF 54 in a stand-by status, or for covering duties;
 - 54.3 ships replenishing at Kerama Retto;
 - 51.19 ships assigned to the operations on the East side of Okinawa.

This organization worked very well and provided a definite tactical commander who could take charge on any situation under the direction of commander, TF 51.

Insofar as commander, TF 54 was personally concerned, Command relationships were well understood and were satisfactory from beginning to end.

C. Under the directives in the Operation Plan of Vice Admiral Turner, the ships of TF 54 were to perform a dual function:

(a) They were charged with the preparation of enemy-held territory for the assault and with direct support of the troops after landing. This involved systematic destruction of the enemy coastal defense artillery positions and strong-points; shore bombardment preparatory to the landing, and direct fire support of the troops after landing and until final victory was assured.

(b) They were also to provide ships to a covering force in defense of the objective area against enemy surface raids. A violent Japanese reaction to this entire operation was expected. It was contemplated that surface attempts under concealment of bad weather or low visibility would be made upon the area. Therefore, a command set up to quickly meet such a threat had to be established. This was the principal battle function of commander TF 54.

While performing the functions under (a) above, the ships of TF 54 were assigned to TF 52. In their other naval functions, i. e., during movement from the base into the assault area; in

preparation for and in conducting naval surface engagements or when acting as covering force for the area, they were under commander TF 54. By conferences at Ulithi the Command relationships were clearly worked out so that the execution of the plan proceeded with great smoothness and without any question as to Command authority.

During the preparatory period in the assault area, Rear Admiral Blandy divided the ships assigned to him into fire support units, each commanded by flag officer. This permitted local tactical situations to be met, such as defense against air attacks, submarines, etc., and afforded a satisfactory Command relationship. Before dark each night these units, except for a few ships retained for night duties, were returned to commander TF 54 who conducted their night covering evolutions, releasing the various units in time to take up their fire-support duties the next morning, holding the force together when threatened by early morning air attacks.

On L-day, Vice Admiral Turner assumed the duties of commander, TF 52 according to plan. Thereafter, scheduled bombardment ships were individually assigned to the assault force commanders, commander, TF 53, commander, TF 55, and commander, TF 51.19. This was done without regard to tactical organization and without fire-support group commanders. There were doubtless reasons for this arrangement, such as, ammunition supply and availability, types, and calibers of guns, etc. From the Command point of view, however, and to meet local tactical situations or emergencies, the method used in the period of preparation is believed to be preferable. There is also the point that services of rear admirals commanding tactical units should be utilized whenever practicable.

Reports.—The inclusion in one section of Operation Plans of a list of reports of various kinds desired by that command would be very helpful. This would be preferably in tabular form showing the nature of the report, to whom made, and when and by what means.

Flexibility.—More widespread use of the growing system of skeleton task organization with an attached annex of assignment of forces is recommended. Such a system permits more convenient change and reduces the bulk of the Operation Plan per se. The use of the term "Ships assigned" and

"Senior officer of group" may likewise make a task organization valid over a longer period of time. There is a tendency in Operation Plans for amphibious assaults to consider only the D-day organization, whereas that day represents only a very small proportion of the time the plan is effective.

Changes.—Thousands of officer-hours can be saved by issuance of replacement pages wherever possible. This applies particularly to large printed tables and charts.

From: Commander, Cruiser Division 5 (CTF 54)

At 1200, 5 May 1945, commander, Cruiser Division 5, relieved commander, Cruiser Division 13 (Rear Admiral M. L. Deyo) as commander, TF 54, and was in turn relieved at 0600, 23 May 1945, by commander, Battleship Division 3 (Rear Admiral L. R. McCormick). Throughout the period of this report, the ships assigned to TF 54 were engaged in rendering fire support at Okinawa Shima. The destroyers rotated on radar picket duty. Commander, Cruiser Division 5, was, with the exception of a few ammunition replenishment days, in command of TG 54.1 which supported the western side Okinawa.

Fire support missions were as assigned by the commander, TG 51.22.

The task force was organized as follows in accordance with a message received from commander, TF 51, on 27 April:

TG 54.1—Western Fire Support Group—assigned ships supporting the Twenty-fourth Corps from the western side of Okinawa with the task of furnishing gunfire support as directed by CTG 51.22.

TG 54.2—Covering Group—with the task of deploying as a covering force against surface attack, otherwise to anchor in the transport area and to carry out such maneuvers as to best resist air attack and cover ships in the transport area.

TG 54.3—Logistics Group: The composition of each of these task groups varied from day to day, the ships being assigned by commander, TF 51 to best carry out the daily tasks and to allow replenishment of ships of TF 54 and TG 51.19, Eastern Fire Support Group. On the afternoon of 5 May, ships were organized as follows: