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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE  
WASHINGTON



DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS BRANCH, A.G.O.

*325-1115 (2) 10-3*

*357th Sig Bde  
77th Sig Regt  
Combat Reports 4-9 Nov 43  
must*

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By KK NARA Date 7-25-08HEADQUARTERS TWENTY SEVENTH INFANTRY  
A. P. O. # 25

7 November 1943.

SUBJECT : Informal Report of Combat Operations.

TO : Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, APO # 25.

In compliance with memorandum, 25th Infantry Division,  
4 November 1943, the following information is submitted:

## a. Security Measures.

Security of the Regimental C.P., Collecting Company, and Engineer Company consisted of an all around defence furnished by Regimental Headquarters Company and personnel of the other units concerned. When the situation warranted, the Anti-Tank, Cannon Companies, or a Company from the reserve battalion supplemented the security forces.

(2) Forward Area. (See 3, below).

(3) Local Security for attacking echelon and reserves and its source.

Attacking echelon generally furnished its own local security by means of active patrolling to front and flanks, supplemented by units of the reserve companies. As far as possible reserve units maintained close contact at all times with attacking echelons. The Battalion C.P. maintained close contact with attacking echelons, generally forward of the reserve unit.

(4) Security of lines of communications and supply routes.

Security consisted of a series of strong points connected by continuous patrols. Carrying parties from Regimental Anti-Tank and Cannon Companies and battalion carrying parties operated along supply routes and furnished security along these routes.

(5) Night Security Measures.

Forward and rear units habitually established all-around defenses at night. Movement after dark in these areas was prohibited. In the forward areas rifle firing is held to a minimum and automatic weapons are used only when absolutely necessary. We have

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found that hand grenades are much more effective against the enemy at night and can be used without disclosing our positions.

b. Tactics employed.

(1) Night activities were confined to patrol activities only.

(2) Use of "green troops" in attacking echelons.

Approximately one hundred replacements were distributed throughout the regiment and were employed with seasoned troops. In general their performance was very satisfactory.

(3) Use of Straggler lines.

Found to be unnecessary in this organization.

(4) Defensive measures including beach and active defence.

(a) Beach Defense.

Where beach defence sectors were too extensive to be physically covered by troops, a system of strong-points employing a maximum of machine guns, 37 mm and 75 mm guns was established. The area between strong-points was continuously patrolled during daylight. Guns were emplaced so as to provide interlocking fire as far as possible. Artillery and mortar concentrations were registered and plotted covering known enemy landing and evacuation points and those areas impossible to cover by automatic weapons. A system of observation posts was maintained on the small islands to the north of and adjacent to Arundel Island. On several occasions these observation posts called for and adjusted artillery and mortar fire on enemy barge activity.

(b) Active defense during advancing stages.

Upon securing an objective patrols are immediately sent forward to maintain contact with the enemy, reorganization of remaining units is effected, and pursuit of the enemy is begun as soon as possible. Where immediate pursuit is not possible, plans for the organization and defense of the captured terrain are initiated.

It has been standard in this organization for attacks to be discontinued early enough to allow our troops to prepare all-around defense for the night while it is still light. Considerable time is required to coordinate the fires of automatic weapons, prepare suitable fox holes, and establish essential communication lines to all units. It is highly recommended (and in future operations of this organization will be standard procedure) that small reconnaissance patrols

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be dispatched prior to darkness with the mission of reconnoitering the rear of enemy positions during the night. These patrols return at dawn the following day and the information of enemy activities they thus procure is invaluable.

(5) System of relief of front line units.

Relieving units, having been deployed in rear of the front line, passed through the front line units. At no time were units withdrawn prior to being relieved. Relief of units was dependent upon the situation, condition of troops, and availability of reserves.

c. Communications.

(1) Air-Ground.

Not employed. However, during the Arundel campaign both Air Corps and Navy Liaison Officers having direct communication with units under their control, could have been effectively employed by the Regimental Commander. Throughout this campaign the Japanese employed boats, barges, and float planes in reinforcing, supplying, and evacuating personnel between Arundel and Kolombangara. Had PT boats and night fighter planes been under the direct and immediate control of the Infantry Commander, this activity could have been very readily denied the enemy.

(2) Adequacy of communication personnel.

Because of the depleted strength of this regiment throughout these campaigns, communication personnel was not nearly adequate. Communication personnel under the present tables of organization is not sufficient for jungle operations for the following reasons:

(a) Practically all wire communication from regiment to lower units must be laid by hand.

(b) A considerable greater amount of wire is necessary in the jungle than over normal terrain for several reasons:

(1) It is impossible to lay straight lines through dense jungle. This is especially true of lines laid by attacking companies who have neither the time nor the opportunity to cut trails for communication lines.

(2) Because of the difficulty of control of units it is essential that battalion commanders have constant wire communication (sound powered) with

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attacking companies, and the use of the 536 radio is limited and unreliable.

(c) Difficulty of carrying heavy radio equipment over jungle trails necessitates that personnel be frequently relieved.

(d) Maintenance of communication lines in dense, wet jungle is a slow, continuous process requiring the use of considerable personnel on repair crews.

d. Supply.

(1) Use of field kitchens by front line units.

During active operations it is not possible for front line units to use field kitchens. However, consolidated company kitchens under control of the battalion supply officer were maintained. Whenever possible hot coffee, doughnuts, pancakes, sandwiches, etc. were carried to troops by battalion carrying parties. It is advisable for these kitchens to be sufficiently mobile so that they may be repeatedly relocated at the successive point, from which supplies are carried by hand.

(2) Living "off the land".

It was impossible for even our small reconnaissance patrols to subsist off the land.

(3) System assuring priority of supplies. (Covered by previous reports).

(4) Method of storing and segregating supplies.

Covered in detail by previous reports. However, emphasis should be placed on proper storage and inspection of rations and ammunition in island dumps. An excessive amount of spoiled Type C ration and faulty ammunition was issued to this organization which often resulted in a shortage of these necessary supplies and also in the wasting of a good many man-hours of hard, tedious labor on the part of the carrying parties which brought these useless articles to the front-line troops. The regimental ration and ammunition section segregated these supplies as much as possible, but often the emergency of the situation and other factors beyond their control made this work impossible.

(5) Cases of conflict on responsibilities at supply dumps.

Not encountered by this organization.

e. Intelligence.

Covered in detail by previous reports.

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## f. Weapons.

- (1) Use of. Covered in detail in previous reports.
- (2) Types of ammunition. Covered in detail in previous reports.
- (3) Effectiveness of small arms fire against enemy aircraft.

Not employed.

## g. General comments on the enemy.

- (1) His Infantry and Artillery weapons.

(a) Infantry weapons.

The Rifle is inferior to ours in every respect except that when fired its location is very deceiving because of its peculiar "crack" and lack of exposing flash and smoke.

The Light Machine Gun is the best weapon the enemy possesses; it has a high rate of fire, is rapidly loaded, and is light of weight, making it extremely maneuverable.

The Heavy Machine Gun (31 Cal) is heavy, awkward to handle, and readily located when firing. Relatively few of these weapons were encountered.

Light Grenade Discharger (Knee mortar) is very effective in jungle growth as well as in the open. Although it relies more on producing "concussion" rather than fragmentation casualties, it is very accurate, extremely maneuverable, and difficult to locate.

Hand Grenade is inferior to ours in every respect, but is used extensively by the Japanese in jungle combat.

90 mm Mortar - comparable to our 81 mm mortar, but has not been used extensively against our troops.

37mm Anti-tank Gun. Capable of knocking out our light tanks at close range. Fires both HE and AP ammunition. This weapon was used against us only during tank attacks.

(b) Artillery Weapons.

On three separate occasions the enemy fired fairly intense concentrations on our positions and at one time completely

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disrupted telephone communications. Upon the capture of Kolumbangara numerous artillery pieces and considerable ammunition were found. In general the Japanese did not make full use of the artillery he had available.

(2) His supply and transportation facilities.

The enemy depended upon boats, barges, airplanes, and hand-carry overland for his supply and evacuation. Except in organized localities no roads were used.

(3) His use of camouflage and concealment.

The Japanese are expert in the use of natural camouflage and concealment. His pill-boxes, open emplacements, and fox-holes are impossible to locate except at very close ranges. He leaves no freshly dug dirt, dead bushes, or other revealing evidence of his location. Bushes, leaves, grass, etc. are often used on the helmet and clothes of individuals.

(4) The state of training, physical endurance, and morale.

The individual soldier is a crafty, well trained jungle fighter capable of enduring great hardship. His tactical analysis and use of the terrain is excellent. However, his tactical leadership is very poor as evidenced by attempted attacks against our forces; this leadership borders more on the fanatical than on the logical. From prisoners we have learned that the majority of the troops encountered had little confidence in his leaders, and also that his morale was very low. His situation appeared hopeless and he is convinced that Japan will eventually lose the war.

For the Regimental Commander:

*Kenneth C. Robertson*  
KENNETH C. ROBERTSON,  
Captain, 27th Infantry,  
S-3.