

NOTE

This is a preliminary narrative and should not be regarded as authoritative. It has not been checked for accuracy in all aspects, and its interpretations are not necessarily those of the Historical Section as a whole.

Ce texte est préliminaire et n'a aucun caractère officiel. On n'a pas vérifié son exactitude et les interprétations qu'il contient ne sont pas nécessairement celles du Service historique.

Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

AMENDMENTS TO NARRATIVETHE CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE
KISKA OPERATION

Para 19 1. 13 Delete "Inf" and end the sentence at "Corps".
Delete "having successfully -----GSO II".

1. 16 After "Lieut-Colonel" add "(25A)".

Note 25 add
Note 25A Under the U.S. System of staff designation (of Para 20), the appointment of S-3 corresponded to the British Brigade Major. This appointment in 13 Inf Bde was held by Maj. (later Lt.Col.) LJ St. Laurent, OBE, ED. (C.A.R.O. 3388 of 1943).

Para 41 1. 1 for "Stated" read "States".

Appendix - Report of 13 Bde Sigs Offr Insert above the heading the following: With the following report should be read Lt.Col. LJ St. Laurent's comments on folios 102,103 of HQC 5393-5-4.

Para 88 1. 14 add
Canadian experience of combined operations gained in the Dieppe raid provided a basis for the early training programme, and knowledge gained from American operations in the Attu campaign played an important part.

Note 210 add
The record of the construction of this pier by personnel of 24 Fd Coy RCE is with D.E.S.

Appendix 55A - Japanese Evacuation of Kiska sub para (2) 1. 5
for
"destroyed" read "Deterred"

Appendices to be numbered as follows

On first page of appendices, above heading Note on SLEDS insert:-

Following are extracts from appendices to original report.

After Note on SLEDS add (Appx 11)

"	"	"	ATHEY TRAILERS	add (Appx 12)
"	"	"	SLEEPING BAGS	add (Appx 13)
"	"	"	TRENCH FEET	add (Appx 14)
"	STRENGTH AT EMBARKATION			add (Appx 18)
"	Note on THE PART-----OPERATIONS			add (Appx 35)
"	REPORT OF 13 BDE SIGS OFFR			add (Appx 41)
"	NOTE ON US HOSPITALIZATION			add (Appx 43)
"	RATIONS			add (Appx 45)
"	REPORTS ON ACTS OF COURAGE			add (Appx 49)
"	REPORT ON GRENADE EXPLOSION			add (Appx 50)
"	DDOS REPORT ON STORES			add (Appx 52)
"	JAPANESE EVACUATION OF KISKA			add (Appx 55A)
"	THE PROBABLE COST OF ENEMY RESISTANCE			add (Appx 56)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
CANCELLED

THE CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE KISKA OPERATIONS

FOREWORD

A. KISKA

DECLASSIFIED

Authority: DHD 3-3

by COE for DHist NDHQ

Date: NOV 7 1986

2900 miles from Vancouver, second largest island in the second westernmost island group of the Aleutian Chain, lying in the same longitude as New Zealand, the same latitude as London, and situated in the weather breeding zone between the frigid Bering Sea and the more temperate Japanese current of the North Pacific Ocean is Kiska, for fourteen months Japan's most far-reaching threat towards North American security (1).

Running generally from northeast to southwest, Kiska is 25 miles long, with a width varying from two to eight miles. The shore line includes few beaches suitable for landing (the better of which were well controlled by enemy fire) and generally consists of precipitous rocky cliffs bulwarked by reefs, pinnacle rocks, dangerous rip tides, and treacherous undertow. Normal surf to windward is seven feet high and has been recorded at 35 feet during a blow.

The island in general ranges in height from 3996 feet at the summit of the volcano to the north, through sea level lagoons and swamps at the volcano's foot, to a series of ridges averaging 1200 feet. Snow caps the volcano throughout most of the year, ranges down to cover the ridges for from six to eight months, reaches, and remains at, sea level for four months, from December to March inclusive.

Because of the terrific winds that blow for days on end across the island no trees can exist on Kiska, but the super-abundance of precipitation fosters the lush growth of tall, thick, fibrous grass along the lower slopes and in the deep precipitous gullies cut by the rushing, unnavigable streams which drain the heavily watered high ground. This grass, frequently two to three feet in height, is watersoaked and quickly drenches pedestrian passage. It forms interlaced matting which hides narrow gullies, water-filled pot holes and other obstacles, at all times providing a spongy, treacherous footing that quickly fatigues the walker who has not been thoroughly conditioned to its exhausting physical demands.

Such is Kiska, the unattractive once unknown island in the North Pacific whose name was to become a household word in thousands of Canadian homes across the Dominion.

B. THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION (2)

As part of a general offensive against United States bases in the Central and Northern Pacific, the Japanese in Jun 42 invaded Alaskan waters with a large amphibious task force. On 3 Jun, and again on 4 Jun, carrier-based enemy bombers and fighters attacked Dutch Harbour. To the West, the No 3 Maizuru Special Landing Party, composed of 500 marines commanded by Lieut Commander Mukai, Hifumi, occupied Kiska Island on 6 Jun 42. Having captured the small ten-man naval detachment operating the US Weather Station on the island the Japanese immediately started construction of anti-aircraft positions. At the same time some twenty naval vessels moved into Kiska Harbour.

On 12 Jun, 11th Air Force heavy bombers made their first bombing runs over the island, hitting and setting fire to two cruisers and a destroyer. Through the months that followed US air attack, supplemented at times by naval bombardment and submarine activity, continued to harass the Japanese garrison, reinforced by military and naval units in August and December to an estimated strength approaching ten thousand. American occupation of Adak on 31 Aug 42, and Amchitka, on 12 Jan 43, followed in each case by the rapid construction of bomber and fighter-strips, speeded up the tempo of aerial attack on Kiska, and the completion of Attu's reduction in early June made possible the concentration of activities against the sole remaining Japanese stronghold in the Aleutians.

Aerial toll on shipping had forced the enemy to restrict his supply lines to the limited use of submarines. The US capture of Attu completed the isolation of the Kiska garrison. There is evidence in captured Japanese documents to show that the continual harassing from the air had a most depressing effect upon the morale of the defenders (3). It must have been apparent to them that it was only a matter of time before their island would become the target of invasion. The impending presence in the area of an overwhelming task force of all arms, - naval, land and air -- rendered their position untenable. When the American and Canadian forces came ashore on 15-16 Aug 43, they found the island deserted. Japan had been forced to give up her last foothold on North American soil.

I

THE DECISION TO PARTICIPATE

Aleutian Operations Proposed at Pacific Command - Ottawa explores possibilities - The two proposals - Authority is granted.

ALEUTIAN OPERATIONS PROPOSED AT PACIFIC COMMAND

1. The possibility of co-operation by the Canadian Army with the United States Forces in an Aleutian expedition in the summer of 1943 was first considered during a visit to Headquarters, Pacific Command, by Lt-Gen JL DeWitt, Commanding General, Western Defence Command and Fourth Army, on 19 Apr 43, when he discussed with Maj-Gen GR Pearkes, GOC-in-C Pacific Command, the projected American operations. Gen Pearkes reported this meeting to National Defence Headquarters, indicating that the proposed United States operations were to commence early in May (4).

OTTAWA EXPLORES POSSIBILITIES

2. On 10 May 43 Maj-Gen MA Pope, Commander Canadian Army Staff at Washington, drew to the attention of Lt-Gen K Stuart, Chief of the General Staff, NDHQ, an opinion expressed to him by the Secretary of the American Section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence suggesting that (a) the presence of Japanese in the Aleutians could be considered a threat to continental security, (b) Canada, as continental neighbour of the United States was as much concerned as that nation, and (c) that nothing could be more appropriate than that Canada should associate herself with the United States in removing that threat (5).

3. Immediately upon receipt of Gen Pope's communication Gen Stuart wired the GOC-in-C Pacific Command as follows:

"Is it too late to consider some form of army participation? (6)" At the same time the CGS instructed Gen Pope to explore possibilities of Canadian participation with Gen George Marshall, United States Army Chief of Staff (7). On 24 May Gen Pope reported that Gen Marshall had found both Gen DeWitt and Maj-Gen SB Buckner, Commanding General, Alaska Defence Command, "delighted at the prospect of having Canadian units with them in present or future operations in the Aleutians (8)".

4. While Ottawa and Washington were coming to a formal understanding with regard to possible Canadian participation in Aleutian operations, out on the Pacific Coast tentative plans were being drawn up pending authority being granted to put them into effect. As an initial step ten Canadian Army Officers representing "G" Branch, Intelligence, Signals, and the Services, were, with Gen DeWitt's concurrence, sent as observers from Pacific Command to the Alaska Defence Command. They proceeded to Alaska to visit various posts and islands, and their reports on return proved of great value in the later planning of the Kiska operation (9).

THE TWO PROPOSALS

5. On 25 May Gen DeWitt at a conference at Headquarters Pacific Command, outlined two forms in which he would welcome Canadian participation:

PROPOSAL "A" - An infantry battalion with an anti-aircraft battery to proceed as soon as possible for garrison duties on Amchitka to provide additional strength in case of a possible Japanese counter offensive as a result of the loss of Attu.

PROPOSAL "B" - Provision of approximately a brigade group to take part in a United States task force that was to be employed in the capture of Kiska later in the summer.

These two proposals were forthwith submitted by the two Generals to their respective Chiefs of Staff in Ottawa and Washington (10).

6. In a memorandum to the Minister of National Defence, dated 26 May 43, setting forth the two proposals, the CGS pointed out the advantages accompanying the authorization of either or both plans (11):

- (a) Operations would give our troops much needed battle experience.
- (b) Participation would increase the prestige of the Army throughout Canada, and would raise the morale of all troops in Canada, especially those in the Pacific Command.
- (c) The use of "Home Defence" personnel would serve to break down the hostile attitude with which such personnel were regarded by a large section of the Canadian public.
- (d) The participation of elements of the Canadian Army in an active theatre of war in the Pacific in conjunction with the United States Army would not only serve to improve relations with the United States but would exemplify Canada's intentions of playing her full part in the Pacific as well as in the European and Mediterranean regions.
- (e) The participation of elements of the Canadian Army in the Aleutian theatre was in complete accord with the spirit of plans drawn up by the Joint Defence Board and approved by the United States and Canadian Governments.

AUTHORITY IS GRANTED

7. Government authority was granted, and on 3 Jun 43 a wire was sent to Pacific Command Headquarters from the CGS authorizing the formation of a brigade group for the purposes put forward in

proposal "B". Troops were to be picked and concentrated at Courtenay, (this was later changed to Nanaimo) (12), and the force was to be available to leave Pacific Command on approximately 1 Aug for one month's further training in Alaska, prior to offensive operations contemplated early in September. Proposal "A" had not been concurred in (13). Employment of troops in Canada for upwards of four years had been entirely in a defensive role, and the idea of assigning a battalion group to further garrison duties with only remote likelihood of gaining battle experience held little appeal for the Canadian General Staff. An Order of Battle for the force of proposal "B" had already tentatively been drawn up at Pacific Command Headquarters, and it was immediately submitted to NDHQ for approval. The same day saw the completion of an exchange of notes between US Secretary of War, Henry L Stimson and Defence Minister J.L. Ralston, in which the former welcomed Canadian participation in the Aleutians either as a garrison force or in an active operational capacity (14), and the latter gave notice of Canada's readiness "to provide an infantry brigade group for employment along with US troops in offensive operations in the Alaskan - Aleutian Area" (15).

8. "Greenlight" was launched. - It was a momentous occasion. For the first time in history a Canadian force was to be employed in war side by side with American troops on American soil. Nor was this all. The effect upon the morale of those in Pacific Command who knew the decision was dynamic. For over three years the role of the Command had been one of static defence of the West Coast, and as the war continued it had seemed more and more apparent that the Command was becoming merely a training and reinforcement area for the Canadian Army Overseas, with little chance offered for participation in active operations. The picture was now completely changed, the "Green Light" signal to go ahead had been flashed, and Pacific Command became overnight an important stage on the road to Tokyo.

II

THE COMPOSITION OF THE FORCE

The Tactical Brigade Group - The Order of Battle - NRMA
Personnel - The Combat Teams.

THE TACTICAL BRIGADE GROUP

9. When Gen DeWitt first put forward to Gen Pearkes the proposal for a Canadian Brigade group to participate in Aleutian operations he visualized some kind of Canadian formation that would be able to function efficiently within the larger task force which it was proposed to assemble, and to this end the composition of the Canadian element was planned to follow as closely as possible that of the corresponding United States group. This formation, the United States Regimental Group, was composed of a Tactical Group HQ, including special troops, and three Battalion Landing Groups. Each of these BLGs was divided into a Forward Combat Team and a Beach Combat Team. The former comprised a headquarters, with headquarters of various detachments, an infantry battalion, a reinforced (Over establishment) battery of field artillery, a cannon and an anti-aircraft platoon, and detachments of engineer, supply and medical services. The Beach Combat Team included a headquarters and headquarters of detachments, a reinforced company of combat engineers, a reinforced anti-aircraft battery, and detachments of signals, police, quartermaster, ordnance and medical services (16).

10. Upon this pattern, with certain minor necessary modifications, the Canadian Brigade Group was modelled. It will be seen that the basic unit of the formation was the Battalion Landing Group (or Battalion Combat Team), a self-sustaining tactical and administrative organization capable of making an independent landing on a beach, fighting forward, and maintaining itself. As their names indicate both of the two main component parts of the BLG -- the Forward Combat Team and the Beach Combat Team were organized and equipped to fight. The Forward Combat Team had the primary objective of defeating the enemy's main body. The Beach Combat Team, constituting the base installation had as its principal missions:

- (a) To unload ships and small boats on the beach;
- (b) To establish dumps and to move supplies from the beach to the forward area dumps, - the success of the FCT depending upon the energy of the BCT in pushing forward supply;
- (c) To defend the beach and the lines of communication between the beach and the rear of the FCT;
- (d) To evacuate casualties.

In addition to being charged with these specific functions, all or part of the BCT might be called upon as a fighting reserve to the FCT (17).

THE ORDER OF BATTLE

11. The Order of Battle originally drawn up by the Pacific Command planners was as follows (18):

HQ 13 Cdn Inf Bde
13 Cdn Def Pl
Canadian Fusiliers
Winnipeg Grenadiers
Rocky Mountain Rangers
24 Fd Regt RCA
24 Fd Coy RCE
Coy Saint John Fusiliers (MG)
Det 25 Fd Ambulance RCAMC
Dets other services.

12. Units concerned were selected on grounds of their present strength and efficiency, the infantry battalions chosen being the three battalions in Pacific Command most nearly up to War Establishment. Each was recommended by the respective divisional commander as sufficiently well trained for combined operations, provided that a period of intensive training were authorized. The 13 Brigade was the senior brigade in the Command, the 24 Field Regiment was the most fully trained in the Command, and of the field companies the 24 Field Company was considered the best in the 8 Div and was regarded as being as efficient as any in the 6 Div.

13. To take the place of the Battalion of Combat Engineers divided among the Beach Combat Teams in the parallel US group, it was decided to include with the Greenlight Force, as the main labour and defence element of the Beach Combat Teams, Le Regiment de Hull (19). With the addition of this French Canadian unit all parts of Canada, - the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the Middle West, and British Columbia was represented in the enterprise. The 19 Field Security Section was also added to the proposed force, and with the approval of the

Commanding General, Western Defence Command, inclusion was authorized of the 46 Light AA Battery and a complete Canadian Field Ambulance (the 25th).

NRMA PERSONNEL

14. The employment of NRMA personnel in the Greenlight Force required special governmental authorization. Order-in-Council PC 7995, dated 4 Sep 42, had already authorized the despatch to Alaska, for employment or defence, of certain units on whose strength were HD personnel, and PC 3238, dated 28 Apr 43, had extended the authority to cover all such NRMA personnel. PC 5011, dated 18 Jun 43, now specifically included with Alaska "the Aleutian Islands and other United States Islands adjacent thereto", giving to the Minister of National Defence the necessary authority to despatch NRMA personnel. Under the terms of the Order, the Minister issued a Direction, dated 11 Jul 43, approving the despatch of the "Greenlight Force" for training, service or duty at Alaska or any other Alaskan territory east of Adak. Upon receipt of a report from VCGS from Alaska on 11 Aug (20) that Greenlight training, morale, and equipment was satisfactory, the Minister issued Direction No 2, dated 12 Aug 43, removing the limitation imposed in the first Direction, and permitting the despatch of the Greenlight Force to any part of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands.

THE COMBAT TEAMS

15. By the middle of June the 13 Inf Bde had been reorganized into HQ 13 Cdn Inf Bde Group and 14, 15 and 16 Cdn Combat Teams (BLGs). HQ Group consisted of Bde HQ, together with Group services and a reserve for the Battalion Combat Teams. Its establishment was 74 officers and 870 other ranks (21). To a large extent this group contained the headquarters of the various units whose elements were dispersed under the command of the Combat Teams, a concentration of command power that often made administration particularly difficult, introducing a double source of orders, at times somewhat confusing. Later experience led the Force Commander to suggest that once the Battalion Combat Teams had been formed the only HQ to remain as such should have been that of the Field Regiment, whose centralization at the earliest possible stage was desirable (22). Experience also questioned the value of the presence of detachments of the various services in HQ Group, as the Group invariably operated over a beach already being used by one or other of the Bn CTs, and some decentralization of these sub-units was later effected.

16. The 14, 15 and 16 Canadian Combat Teams were respectively built around 1 Bn Canadian Fusiliers, 1 Bn Winnipeg Grenadiers and 1 Bn Rocky Mountain Rangers. The Forward Combat Team component in each case consisted of the infantry battalion, a battery of the 24 Fd Regt RCA (the 49th, 84th and 85th respectively); a section of the 24 Fd Coy RCE (less Dets); a platoon of the Saint John Fusiliers (MG) and detachments of 13 Cdn Inf Bde Sig Sec RC Sigs, 24 Fd Regt Sig Sec RC Sigs, and the 25 Fd Amb RCAMC. Establishment of each Forward Combat Team was 51 Officers and 1016 other ranks (23).

17. Each Beach Combat Team comprised a rifle company of Le Regiment de Hull, a troop of the 46 Lt A A Bty RCA, and LAD (Type B) RCOC, an issue section of 99 Detachment RCASC; a clearing platoon of 6 US Fd Hospital; and detachments of 13 Cdn Bde Inf Sig Sec RC Sigs, 24 Fd Coy RCE, 25 Fd Amb RCAMC, 30 Ord Store Coy RCOC, 19 Sec Cdn Pro Corps, 24 Fd Regt Sig

Sec RCSigs and 14 Dental Det CDC. The Beach Combat Team had an establishment of 16 officers and 353 other ranks, making with the Forward Combat Team a total establishment of 67 officers and 1369 other ranks, or 1436 all ranks (24).

18. With the infantry battalion expanded by reinforcements of arms and services into a combat team nearly double its size, the need early became apparent for additional staff to assist the Bn HQ to train, fight and administer not only its own battalion but also the attached sub-units and detachments. Decentralization of the Bde HQ Group in returning to the combat team certain personnel of unit HQ of each team's various component arms and services did not completely solve the problem, and the Force Commander recommended that for future operations of a similar nature each Bn Combat Team should be given an "ad hoc" HQ establishment independent of the Bn HQ and comparable to a skeleton Bde HQ.

III

THE COMMAND

The Brigade Staff - Canadian-US Relationship

THE BRIGADE STAFF

19. In making the selection of a Force Commander, (Brig DR Sargent who was at the time commanding 13 Inf Brigade being disqualified by medical category) NDHQ asked Canadian Military Headquarters in London for recommendations. Gen McNaughton nominated Brig HW Foster, who was then commanding 7 Inf Bde. Brig Foster, Ld SH(RC), went overseas in 1939 as Bde Major of 1 Cdn Inf Bde, commanded the first Reconnaissance Regiment in the 1 Cdn Div, and had recently completed the Combined Training Course at Dorland (25). At the same time Gen McNaughton recommended as Brigade Major of the new force, Major WS Murdoch, Seaforth of C. Major Murdoch, who was a graduate of No 1 Canadian Junior War Staff Course, was serving at the time as GSO II (Oprs) with 1 Cdn Inf Corps, having successfully filled the posts of GSO III and GSO II. He had been Brigade Major with the Spitzbergen expedition. He was appointed to the Greenlight Force with the rank of Lieut-Colonel. These officers left England immediately and reported to HQ Pacific Command, on 17 Jun. They were joined in Eastern Canada by Lt-Col D Menard DSO, who had been appointed to command Le Regt de Hull.

20. In order to remove possible grounds of uncertainty on the part of co-operating US forces as to the functions and various duties of the members of Brig Foster's Staff it was considered highly desirable to reorganize 13 Cdn Inf Bde HQ on the US staff system. This resulted in the following establishment being filled:

Bde Comdr	Brig HW Foster	Ld SH(RC)
Chief of Staff	Lt-Col W.S. Murdoch	Seaforth of C.
S-1(Personnel)	Maj TA McWaters	HQ Pacific Command
S-2(Intelligence)	Capt AFP Freeman	1 Edm Fus
S-3(Oprs & Trg)	Maj LJ St Laurent	R de Hull
S-4(Supply & Evac)	Maj JG Stevens	RCR
Asst S-4	Capt RD Shaneman	11 DD

.....

In addition to these, in order to provide proper reliefs for Staff Officers and administration of the HQ itself certain other appointments were subsequently made, personnel being "borrowed" from the HQ of units whose sub-units had been detailed to combat teams. These were:

Asst S-2	Lt GT de Hueck	R de Hull
Asst S-3	Maj GP Murphy	Saint John Fus
Camp Commandant	Capt WP Dey	11 DD

CANADIAN-US RELATIONSHIP

21. The status of the Canadian Commander in relationship to the American force with which his troops were to serve was defined in instructions from the Chief of General Staff to the GOC-in-C (26) and conveyed to Brig Foster in his letter of appointment (27). Upon arrival in Alaska 13 Bde Group would come under operational control of Lt-Gen SB Buckner, Commanding General, Alaska Defence Command, and when the task force proceeded on its final mission Brig Foster would come under the command of Maj-Gen CH Corlett, Commanding General No 9 Amphibious Training Force. Further, since provision of supplies and transport was to be a United States responsibility the Canadian Commander's advice and views would undoubtedly be sought in matters not strictly operational. The relationship between Canadian and United States forces was that of co-belligerents, "serving together" as integral parts of a combined force in the field. The entity of the Canadian detachment was to be maintained at all times, but the degree of integration with US forces must be determined by local conditions and circumstances. Order-in-Council PC 5012, dated 18 Jun 43, defining the relationship in command, provided that except in matters affecting discipline and/or punishment the superior ranks of one force were given power of command over the junior members of the other force as if they all held relative rank in the same force. Throughout the entire operations this relationship was maintained in the most harmonious and co-operative manner. Full disciplinary powers over the Canadian Force were given to Brig Foster with powers to convene Field General Courts-Martial (28).

22. Brig Foster's command carried with it a further important responsibility. In coming to an agreement regarding joint participation in the Aleutian zone each Government had reserved to itself the right under extraordinary circumstances to withdraw from the undertaking. To Brig Foster, as Senior Combatant Officer, was given power to exercise this right, but to no officer at a lower level. Decision to withdraw was only to be reached on consultation with the GOC-in-C, unless such consultation were not feasible in point of time. It will be seen that the retention of this channel of communication linked Brig Foster at different stages of the projected operation into three chains of command:-

(i) US Navy

Brig HW Foster, OC 13 Cdn Inf Bde Gp: Maj-Gen CH Corlett, Commanding General Landing Force 16.8: Vice Admiral TC Kincaid, USN, Commander North Pacific Force, Pacific Fleet.

(ii) US Army

Brig HW Foster, OC 13 Bde Gp: Brig-Gen L Ready, Commander Northern Sector: Maj-Gen CH Corlett, Commanding General Landing Force 16.8: Maj-Gen SB Buckner, Commanding General Alaska Defence Command: Lt-Gen JD DeWitt, Commanding General Western Defence Command.

.....

(iii) Canadian Army

Brig HW Foster, OC 13 Bde Gp: Maj-Gen GR Pearkes,
GOC-in-C Pacific Command: Maj-Gen JC Murchie VCGS:
Lt-Gen K Stuart, CGS NDHQ.

IV

PLANNING FOR GREENLIGHT

The Planning Committee - The Operational Plan - Mobilization,
Personnel - Reinforcements and Replacements - Mobilization,
Equipping the Force - At Vancouver - At Seattle - At Nanaimo -
Mobilization, Administration

THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

23. The exacting task of drawing up and supervising the preliminary execution of the Canadian plans for the Greenlight expedition was placed in the hands of an Operational and Administrative Planning Committee under the direction of the GOC-in-C, consisting of Brig WN Bostock, BGS Pacific Command; Brig WHS Macklin, Brig i/c Administration Pacific Command; and Brig Sherwood Lett, DCGS(B), who was functioning as an NDHQ Liaison Officer to HQ Pacific Command (29). The Committee throughout the planning period was in constant consultation with the Force Commander, Brig HW Foster. Time was short, the date of embarkation having been advanced to 10 Jul, and the Planning Committee worked under great pressure attacking the many problems arising out of the conversion and equipping of a Canadian force on American lines. A number of United States Officers came to Pacific Command to assist in their respective specialized spheres, their help, which was given unstintingly, proving invaluable to the Canadian planners.

THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

24. The U.S. Operational Plan, within the scope of which Greenlight plans were drawn up, provided for the occupation of the Island of Kiska, believed to be held by an estimated force of 11,000 Japanese, of which the great majority were fighting troops (30). The total military strength of the force to be employed against the enemy was approximately 32,000. It consisted of twelve American Battalion Combat Teams (BLGs) with HQ Reserves, a Special Duty Force (including the Canadian Special Service Battalion) for Commando duties, and the Canadian Greenlight Force of three Battalion Combat Teams, and a HQ Reserve. Supporting and co-operating with the military group were strong United States Air and Naval Forces. In accordance with US policy governing amphibious operations, the entire force would be under the command of Admiral TC Kincaid, US Navy, until the initial beach heads had been established, after which Maj-General CH Corlett, US Army, would assume command. The Canadian Force would proceed direct to an island in the Aleutians for approximately one month's further training prior to the assault on the final objective.

25. Under the Plan it was proposed that Canadian weapons would be used by the Greenlight Force with the following exceptions:
(a) 12 United States 75-mm pack howitzers to be substituted for the same number of 25-pounders in the 24 Field Regiment,

.....

(b) 24 United States 81-mm mortars to replace the 3-inch mortars in the Canadian infantry battalions. The 75-mm pack howitzers with pneumatic tires were provided as an alternative for the 25-pounders because of their greater ease of man-handling in difficult terrain. The 81-mm mortar was chosen for its superior range (approximately 1000 yards greater than that of the 3-inch mortar), and because the use of the American weapon would simplify the problem of ammunition supply. In addition to these American weapons some 400 United States carbines were issued to officers, and to stretcher bearers of the Field Ambulance, in place of rifles (31).

26. No Canadian vehicles other than guns and limbers were to be taken, the United States providing all mechanical transport. Equipment and supply in general became a matter of US provision, in order to avoid setting up a Canadian maintenance system, and to give Canadian troops the advantage of using many special items of United States and Alaskan equipment which were available, much of which had already been tested under campaign conditions in operations at Attu (32).

27. Ammunition was to be provided on a scale comparable to that used by the United States. The United States plan was to provide ten units of fire for ground weapons, and 15 units for anti-aircraft weapons, to accompany the Force and to be immediately available in the combat ships. The United States unit of fire being approximately the same as the Canadian G 1098 scale, it was decided to send ten to fifteen times G 1098 for each weapon of Canadian provision. Weapons supplied by the United States would be provided with United States ammunition on the United States scales (33).

28. Pacific Command Headquarters was now faced with the immense problem of mobilizing, equipping and providing for the maintenance of the Canadian component of the expedition. Important decisions had to be reached regarding policy, and attention given to the countless administrative details inseparable from the organization and mobilization of a force of the nature of Greenlight. Shortage of time demanded that these decisions be made with the least possible delay. Lack of availability of certain forms of equipment and supplies added to the difficulty of the planners. It must be borne in mind too that the type of terrain in which operations were contemplated was one entirely new to Canadian forces and the most difficult of any that had yet been contemplated. All these factors must be considered in making any evaluation of the manner in which the Canadian planning was effected.

MOBILIZATION - PERSONNEL

29. The administrative planning and execution may be said to have fallen broadly under three headings: mobilization, movement, and maintenance of the force. To carry out the first step in mobilization, the concentration of the troops, Nanaimo was selected for the main force, with one battalion and other units going to Courtenay. This decision was dictated by the lack of accommodation for the entire force at Courtenay. It meant that while Greenlight troops were enabled to undergo a short but intensive training in combined operations it was not found possible, in the limited time available, for combat teams to be fully organized and concentrated as teams prior to embarkation.

30. The units concerned assembled at their respective areas as fast as movement could be arranged (34). The Winnipeg Grenadiers came 1000 miles from Prince Rupert; the 24 Field Company came from Prince George; the 25 Field Ambulance had to be brought out from Vernon, while a large detachment of this unit doing duty in the

hospital at Wainwright was hurriedly returned from that point. Most of the other major units were already on Vancouver Island, and their concentration presented no difficulty. The small service detachments had to be organized "ab initio". By the 18 Jun, the three combat teams had been roughly segregated, the 14th and 15th at Nanaimo, and the 16th at Courtenay. The 24 Field Coy were temporarily quarantined for a case of suspected meningitis and were despatched to billets at Comox Airport, and as a result their sections were deprived of the opportunity of training continuously with their respective combat teams (35).

REINFORCEMENTS AND REPLACEMENTS

31. The problem of bringing the participating units up to strength was made more difficult by two conditions:

(a) the ruling of NDHQ that no soldier enlisted subsequent to 15 Feb 43 should be included in the Force and that no soldier who had not completed four months' training should be taken (36), and (b) the high percentage of rejects from all units that followed the medical boarding and interviews with Army Examiners. The policy of reinforcing units from the 6 and 8 Divs was generally followed except where it was necessary to obtain assistance from NDHQ to supply (a) French-speaking reinforcements for Le Regiment de Hull, (b) trained regimental signallers, of whom there was almost a total lack in Pacific Command because of successive overseas drafts, and (c) trained medical personnel for the 25 Field Ambulance.

32. It was also necessary to change a large number of officers. The Commanding Officer and the 2 i/c of Le Regiment de Hull were both replaced, together with thirteen other officers of this Unit, including the Adjutant (37). There was considerable difficulty also in finding officers for the 24 Field Regiment, from whose ranks drafts had been drawn for the 21 Field Regiment proceeding overseas. When Greenlight finally embarked, it carried over fifty 2/Lieutenants on its strength (38). The considerable amount of reposting of officers and other ranks that had to take place during mobilization was undoubtedly one of the factors causing later discontent, leading to the numerous cases of absence without leave that occurred prior to embarkation.

MOBILIZATION - EQUIPPING THE FORCE

33. It had been decided when Greenlight was first planned that the Canadian Force would be equipped mainly with its own weapons, that it would wear United States special Alaskan clothing, with a few items of identifying Canadian clothing and equipment being retained, and that all supply of rations, fuel, accommodation and general stores maintenance would be handled by United States lines of communication. The principal Canadian problem then in equipping the Force was that of obtaining and issuing a tremendous quantity of equipment and clothing of United States pattern, and that of moving an enormous amount of Canadian ammunition and spare weapons to the Seattle Port of Embarkation in time to be loaded into the transport ships.

34. Upon the shoulders of the DDOS, Pacific Command, fell the enormous task of creating a new set of Canadian equipment and store tables for the Greenlight Force. On the basis of the establishment of each unit, sub-unit and detachment in the Force the tables set down the scale of issue of more than 350 items of Canadian and US clothing and equipment, together with the quantities required for the 20% maintenance reserve. On completion the tables were printed for distribution by US Engineers at HQ WDC and Fourth Army, and represented a valuable contribution to the planning of this and possible future operations by combined US and Canadian Forces.

AT VANCOUVER

35. Lack of facilities at Nanaimo prompted the decision to assemble all equipment at the Ordnance Depot at Lapointe Pier, Vancouver, there to be broken into unit lots and transported by CPR Steamer, rail ferry and RCASC water transport to the concentration area. The 20,000 square feet of storage space at Lapointe Pier proving inadequate to handle the volume of stores within the available time, additional accommodation was rented at the Terminal Dock, Vancouver, and almost all of the American stores, equipment and clothing were handled over this dock (39).

36. The first consignments of United States equipment and clothing reached the Terminal Dock on the 26 Jun, and during the next ten days the work of breaking bulk and trans-shipment to Nanaimo was pressed forward with the utmost despatch. A large scow was rented capable of holding between 300 and 400 tons. It was loaded by expert stevedores and towed by a RCASC vessel. The scow made two trips carrying in all about 700 tons of stores. In addition a second RCASC vessel of the fish-packer type shuttled continuously between the Terminal Dock and Nanaimo carrying about 90 tons per trip. Much of the stores was shipped on freight cars on the ferry and many more consignments were sent each day by the regular CPR steamer. No little credit was reflected upon the staff of the Ordnance Depot at Lapointe Pier and the Terminal Dock, as well as upon the RCASC water transport section, for the speed and efficiency with which the exacting task was completed.

AT SEATTLE

37. At the same time arrangements were made for the loading of Canadian ammunition and spare weapons at Seattle. It had been decided that the four ships which were to transport the Canadian Force to the Aleutians should be "basically loaded" at SPOE (Seattle Port of Embarkation), and that upon arrival at the Canadian embarkation ports the remaining load of weapons, ammunition and equipment would be added. The "basic load" included (a) rations for the voyage, (b) normal maintenance for 30 days in rations, clothing, equipment and other stores, provided by the United States authorities, (c) reserve weapons of Canadian provision on a scale of 6% of G 1098 (d) 75% of the Canadian reserve ammunition. None of this load would be removed at Adak, the training area selected in the Aleutians (40).

38. A delegation of SPOE authorities came to Vancouver to discuss details. Maj JH McIntosh, SO, RCA, was despatched to San Francisco as Canadian Liaison Officer to HQ, WDC, and Maj HA Jones, RCE, went to SPOE in a similar capacity. An Inspector of Ordnance Equipment, Maj HA McFarlane, RCOC, and a staff of ammunition examiners were also established at Seattle for the purpose of sorting and checking Canadian consignments. Two of these examiners accompanied the initial cargo to Adak on 15 Jun to supervise of loading and storage of the Canadian ammunition and weapons at that point.

39. An unexpected complication was encountered in connection with the loading of Canadian 25-pounder ammunition at SPOE. Because of the soft nature of the ground on which it was expected Canadian Artillery would be finding its targets it was considered that detonation of the 25-pdr shell would be improved by the substitution of a time fuse (41). As a result it had been decided to re-fuse some 20,000 shells using fuses No 222 and No 234 to replace the No 119. Provision of these fuses was delayed and the re-fusing operation had to be done in a great hurry at Seattle. To complicate matters still further it was found that the shell when fitted with

No 222 fuse could not be replaced in its box with the cap on the fuse. It was therefore necessary to remove the caps and substitute special flexible fuse covers which had to be fastened on with tape. The 28 AA Regiment from Vancouver Defences provided a working party of 137 all ranks which was despatched to Seattle to operate under the command of Major A.D. Waddell, RCOC (42). Working without intermission for more than 36 hours the fusing party completed its emergency job in time for embarkation.

40. It early became apparent that two special items of equipment requisitioned from the United States would not be available in full quota. These were the sleds or pallets upon which it was proposed to load a large proportion of reserve ammunition and stores (43), and the pack boards, Yukon pattern, which had been selected in preference to the United States rucksack. In both cases "rush" contracts had to be let to Canadian firms, who produced a large proportion of the required equipment in time for the date of sailing, the balance following the force on the freighter "BURKE".

AT NANAIMO

41. One of the early shipments to arrive from the United States was the special transport being provided in place of Canadian MT. It consisted of 50 light cargo carriers, T-15, ("Snowjeeps"), 34 tractors and bulldozers (D-4 and D-6), and 18 six-ton Athey trailers (44). All this transport was overhauled at the new Ordnance Workshop in Nanaimo. The OME and his staff also overhauled in this Workshop all the guns, ie Canadian 25-pounders, 6-pounders, Bofors and Vickers machine guns as well as the 75-hows and the 81-mm mortars supplied by the United States.

42. The task of issuing clothing and personal equipment to the newly mobilized force proceeded as rapidly as stores became available. Each man retained Canadian battle dress with badges and insignia and was issued with Canadian high boots, special shoe packs and insoles of Canadian manufacture, cap comforter and black beret as well as exchanging his standard respirator for the British Light pattern. For the rest his clothing and equipment was of United States issue, and included many items specially designed for the Aleutian type of climate. The most popular piece of equipment received by the men was the American sleeping bag which was to prove far superior to the customary Army blankets (45).

43. Some difficulty was encountered in the fitting of the boots, leather high. These were being provided by a factory in Eastern Canada and although issues were pressed forward as fast as possible, distribution was not completed until a few days before embarkation. Le Regiment de Hull presented a particular problem in this regard because of the extra ordinary proportion of its men with very small feet demanding an unusual number of small sizes of boots. A boot exchange set up in Nanaimo prior to embarkation enable units to exchange a good many pairs of shoes to facilitate fitting, but a few men had still not been satisfactorily fitted by embarkation time and adjustment was left to be completed during the training period in the Aleutians.

44. Special medical stores were issued to units and to individuals to ensure that all personnel were protected as completely as possible against infection or disease. Medical records from Attu showed that in operations there, only one instance of an infected wound had been encountered, and in that case an old type dressing had been used. Every officer and other rank was therefore issued with the new type US Field Dressing a dressing that included an envelope of sulfanilamide crystals. These crystals were to be

placed on the wound before applying the dressing. He also carried a package of eight Sulfadiazine tablets to be taken internally should he become wounded. To assist in the provision of a safe drinking water supply in the field all ranks received an issue of halizone tablets, and were instructed in their proper use in chlorination. Unhappy experiences with frostbite and trench feet at Attu led to units being supplied with ratfish liver oil, a substitute for whale oil, frequent and systematic applications of which were designed to toughen the feet against the extremes of Aleutian weather (46).

45. The task of completing the equipping of Greenlight within so brief a time limit, a limit that had been shortened by almost three weeks, was completed by Administration only through the greatest possible effort and the good fortune in encounter no insuperable accidental delays. The source of supply in general lay many thousands of miles away. A Quebec factory provided Greenlight's boots in piece-meal lots; arsenals and magazines in Eastern Canada supplied the bulk of the ammunition; and United States equipment was shipped from a dozen widely separated depots situated in all parts of the country. Such extensive use had to be made of express shipments of Canadian stores that the Controller of Transport protested at the use of rolling-stock. One entire special express train-load of ammunition crossed the continent to Seattle. Shipments of minor key items such as blood plasma and fuse keys were even made by air express. But when the time came for embarkation there could be little doubt that Greenlight was the most completely equipped Force in all details ever to have sailed from a Canadian port.

MOBILIZATION, ADMINISTRATION

Medical

46. While the mobilization of the Greenlight Force was proceeding at the concentration area, administrative arrangements in various services were being carried to completion. Medical Boards examined not only the five thousand personnel who finally comprised the embarkation list but many hundreds of others who had to be rejected for category reasons. Inoculations, vaccinations and blood groupings were completed for all ranks and the blood group marked on each man's identity disk. Plans for the evacuation of casualties and the forwarding of casualty reports were formulated. The organization of the 25 Field Ambulance was adjusted to meet the requirements of the special nature of the Force (47).

Dental

47. Two Dental Sections of two officers each were kept busily employed checking dental sheets and performing emergency dental work upon the personnel of the force. These officers were attached, one to each Combat Team and one to Brigade Group Headquarters. Arrangements were made with the American Medical Corps for proper replacement of all expendable dental stores.

Pay

48. Shortly after concentration all officers and other ranks were placed on the Pay Book system. No 19 Field Cash Office, RCAPC, was organized with Maj JF Petrie as Field Cashier assisted by Capt ME Armstrong. It was felt that the size of the force demanded the appointment of an Assistant Cashier. Arrangements were made for the provision of American funds for the payment of troops on arrival at their destination. All pay was to be issued in American funds at par of exchange. Enough American funds were provided through the Field Cashier to Unit Paymasters to enable

them to make a cash payment on board ship of at least \$5.00 United States funds per man.

Postal

49. Postal arrangements provided for the establishment of an Army Post Office (CAPO 51) at Vancouver. Mail for the force would be sorted at MPO 1106 in Vancouver Barracks, placed in Unit bags and forward through Seattle. The appreciation of one battalion at these arrangements is shown in its war diary entry of 31 Aug. "Sorting took the minimum of time as the letters were already grouped by Companies and Sub-units, and tied in bundles, a happy thought on some one's part" (48). No 11 Postal Detachment, CPC (Lt H MacDonald and 4 ORs) would accompany the force to handle mail in the field and to work in close conjunction with the American Postal Units which would be conducting the sale of money orders and air mail stamps to Canadian troops.

Chaplains

50. Five Chaplains were provided for the Force, a Protestant Padre for each of the three Combat Teams and two Roman Catholics, one for Le Regt de Hull and one for Bde HQ. All had served for varying amounts of time with Units on the Pacific Coast and were thoroughly familiar with the type of men in their care and the problems that had to be faced.

Records

51. The Command Records Officer, Major S Henson, proceeded to Nanaimo where a staff of 45 records clerks made a thorough check of all documents. Particular attention was given to the examination of MFsm 4, in order to make sure that no one enlisted or enrolled subsequent to 15 Feb 43 remained on the strength of the Force. Under the direction of Lt-Col JJP. de Salaberry, NDHQ, 2 Echelon Pacific Command was established at Nanaimo, and the Force went on a Field Return basis on 26 Jun 43. Following the embarkation the main body of the 2 Echelon, under Capt GW Carr, moved to Vancouver, while an advance party consisting of Lieut TC Wilson and two NCOs accompanied the force to Adak. Arrangements were made for the advance party to communicate with its base in Vancouver by way of the US Signal Centre, Seattle, a teletype being installed direct from Seattle to 2 Echelon in Vancouver Barracks

Canteens

52. At the express wish of General DeWitt no Canadian Canteens were provided. In order that an equal distribution of the supplies available on board ship might be made, Officers Commanding detachments on the various ships were instructed to indent to the United States Post Exchanges for their supplies each day and to be responsible for their distribution among the troops. Arrangements were made for a supply of cigarettes and games by Auxiliary Services for use on the transports.

Graves

53. No provision was made for a Graves Registration Unit to accompany the force, the responsibility for devising and executing a system of marking and registering graves being placed upon Brigade Headquarters. Instructions were issued that crosses or other suitable memorials should be erected as opportunity provided and that photographs of graves should be taken whenever possible. All records of graves were to be sent through 2nd Echelon to the Graves registration Section, Director of Records, NDHQ.

Publicity

54. In order that Greenlight might receive adequate news coverage for release to the Canadian Public at the appropriate time, the consent of WDC and Fourth Army was obtained to the sending of three Canadian press representatives with the PRO, Pacific Command (Maj G Sivertz), accompanied by two Canadian Army photographers (49). All news despatches and pictures were to be cleared through the Naval Alaskan Sector Censor, and no public release was to be made without authority of the War Department at Washington, who would co-ordinate with Ottawa joint release in the United States and Canada. While the PRO photographers gave the Greenlight Force good coverage from the view point of public interest, their natural concentration was upon shots of public appeal rather than in the field of purely military interest. The two landed with the first wave at Green Beach and got good pictures there and later at Kiska Harbour. At no time however did they have liaison with Canadian Intelligence personnel on the Island and their early return to Canada left the Greenlight Force without photographic facilities. It was only due to the ingenuity of the Bde S-2 in borrowing for a day in September the services of a US Signals Photo Section cameraman, and retracing with him the path from Green Beach to Kiska Harbour that official pictures of the Canadian stay on Kiska went into the record.

55. The tremendous amount of administrative and clerical work involved in the planning and executing of all these arrangements on the "A" side can hardly be estimated. Each phase presented its own problems. New records had to be created for 2 Echelon. Printers could not be found to handle contracts in the limited time available. The necessary forms were drawn up and multilithed by Administrative Staff. The creation of the Field Cash Office with the work involved in changing 5000 accounts over to the Pay Book system was in itself no small administrative accomplishment.

An entirely new organization had to be set up in the establishment of the base post office, with a staff to be selected, organized and trained in the barest possible time. These problems were all new, faced by Pacific Command for the first time. That met and they were met successfully speaks well for the Administrative Staff. Working long hours at high pressure, the secret nature of their duties precluding the employment of outside assistance, Col HRW Allan (Col Administration), assisted by Mr DB Keir (Personal Assistant to Brig i/c Administration), and two civil service clerks, dealt with these administrative problems as they arose, and handled in one office the tremendous volume of correspondence that the planning of Greenlight entailed.

V

MOVEMENT OF THE FORCE

Transports provided by US - Combat Loading - The Shortage of Time - Embarkation.

TRANSPORTS PROVIDED BY US

56. Loading and embarkation plans were initiated at a conference in San Francisco on 11-13 June between GOC-in-C, Pacific Command BGS, and United States Western Defence Command. The United States provided four troop transports to move the Canadian formation, USAT "DAVID BRANCH", USAT "CHIRIKOFF", SS "SACAJAWEA" and SS "PERIDA". Their capacity for personnel and freight was as

follows (50):

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Allotted to</u>	<u>Capacity Personnel</u>	<u>Freight in tons</u>
"BRANCH"	HQ Group	1200	2500
"SACAJAWEA"	14 Bn Combat Team	1100	6000
"CHIRIKOFF"	15 Bn Combat Team	1300	4500
"PERIDA"	16 Bn Combat Team	1600	4000

These ships were basically loaded at Seattle, beginning 5 July, preparatory to proceeding to Vancouver Island for the embarkation of the Force. A few days before embarkation, as the centre of gravity of activity shifted from Vancouver to the Island, an advanced HQ Pacific Command, was set up at Nanaimo, with the GOC-in-C, BGS, AQMG, DAQMG, and Colonel Admin, moving there to supervise the final arrangements for the departure of the Force.

COMBAT LOADING

57. Considerable importance was attached by the Staff Planners to the need for careful and accurate combat loading of the ships. With off-loading plans completed to the finest detail every item of stores and equipment had to be put into the ships in reverse order to these plans so that when the time came for disembarkation there might be no delay in the rapid and efficient maintenance of supply (51). Maj CS Tracy of the United States Marines was sent by the Western Defence Command to instruct especially selected Officers and ORs of each Combat Team as to the methods of Combat loading of ships (52). Although it was handicap that a three months' course had to be telescoped into less than two weeks, the instructions received made it possible for the personnel selected to exercise a considerable amount of technical supervision over loading and off-loading of the stores. They proceeded to Seattle and were present during the loading operations as representatives of their respective Combat Team Commanders (53).

58. Consideration of the available ports of embarkation on Vancouver Island resulted in a decision reached on the advice of the Naval Officers and concurred in by Officers of the Seattle Port of Embarkation, that embarkation should take place as follows: the "BRANCH" and the "SACAJAWEA" to load at Nanaimo, and the "CHIRIKOFF" and the "PERIDA" at Chemainus. Wharves at Chemainus allowed two ships to be berthed and loaded simultaneously. At Nanaimo, however, the Government wharf had accommodation available for only one ship for loading of stores, so that it was necessary for the USAT "DAVID BRANCH" to load her cargo of stores at the Government wharf and move to the coal wharf for embarkation of her personnel, while the "SACAJAWEA" followed her into the Government wharf to load both cargo and personnel. These arrangements worked satisfactorily. The "BRANCH" arrived at Nanaimo on the evening of 8 July followed by the remaining three ships on the next day (54).

59. The offer of SPOE authorities to bring United States Stevedore Companies to do the loading at Nanaimo and Chemainus was not accepted because of the possibility of labour difficulties. Loading parties of 400 ORs were provided by the 6 Div (55).

60. Under the direction of the Transport Quartermasters a strict order of priority of loading was followed (56). Combat Teams produced loading plans based upon tonnage tables drawn up by Pacific Command Headquarters. Only the unit equipment and stores put on board at Nanaimo and Chemainus were to be off-loaded at Adak, where it was expected (and as events subsequently proved

correctly so) that such off-loading would serve as a useful rehearsal for the final disembarkation. In the order arranged ships would first unload Forward Combat Teams and their weapons (on the "BRANCH", Brigade HQ and Signals), to be followed in turn by Beach Combat Teams, motor transport, artillery, engineer, ordnance and medical stores. Ammunition would be carried with the weapon or on the man, vehicles would carry enough POL for one day's operation, and all personnel would carry four days' rations on the man (57).

61. The ammunition to be taken had been previously strapped down on the special pallets or sleds for ease in loading, each sled containing three units of fire. These were now stacked on top of the sleds that formed part of the basic load. In addition to its guns each Combat Team loaded five 6-ton Athey Trailers, twelve light T-15 Cargo Carriers (snow-jeps), and ten tractors (D-4 and D-6). No 15 and 16 Combat Teams' share of this heavy equipment had to be shipped over the E & N Railway from Nanaimo to Chemainus. The movement through Nanaimo streets of this US mechanical equipment added considerable weight to the belief that the Greenlight Force was destined for an American theatre of war.

THE SHORTAGE OF TIME

62. As loading proceeded, the time element became more and more insistent (58). All boxes of stores had to be camouflage painted, and must further carry the numbers of the ship, a designation of the contents, its weight and cubic content, and the serial number of the unit for which it was intended. So intense was the pressure during the last few days that there were occasions when the Ordnance personnel had no time to check the contents of incoming boxes, being forced to accept the accompanying invoices on trust while spraying on the covering paint, which had not dried by the time the boxes were in the freighters' holds (59). That a similar shortage of time must have existed during the Seattle loading was shown later with the arrival on the Kiska beaches of large numbers of boxes from the basic loads bearing such unilluminating labels as "Engineer Stores", "Ordnance Stores", the covering of camouflage paint having effectively hidden all clues as to the identity of the contents.

EMBARKATION

63. Loading was completed without interruption and was followed by the embarkation of personnel according to carefully pre-arranged plans (60). Guided by members of advance billeting parties the Headquarters Group embarked upon the "DAVID BRANCH", No 14 Combat Team on the "SACAJAWEA" in the early hours of Monday, 12 July (61). The men, each carrying a 60-pound rucksack besides his weapon, marched with a new gait, holding themselves strangely, leaning well forward from the waist with head thrust out, as though to counter the pull of this new burden on their backs. The 15 Combat Team moving by rail from Nanaimo to Chemainus embarked on the "CHIRIKOFF" early on the 12th. The 16 Combat Team at Courtenay together with three companies of Canadian Fusiliers from Nanaimo boarded the "PERIDA" at Chemainus on Sunday, the 11th. The placing of approximately 300 all ranks from the Canadian Fusiliers on the "PERIDA" was necessitated by the large allotment of hold space in the "SACAJAWEA" to freight.

64. Up to the time of embarkation Combat Teams had not been completely segregated, so that the movement of personnel from the training areas to their respective Team boats required careful co-ordination and was accomplished in a manner that reflected skillful staff work.

65. By ten o'clock on the morning of the 12th 4800 heavily laden Canadian officers and men had walked up the gang planks, and embarkation was completed (62). The ships moved out into the harbour and remained there until evening when, sped on their way by the good wishes of the GOC-in-C (63), they proceeded to their rendezvous with the escorting convoy.

VI

SECURITY

Greenlight Security Plan - Confinement to Camp - Security at Embarkation.

GREENLIGHT SECURITY PLAN

66. The matter of security with regard to Greenlight received the most careful attention. It was inevitable that the speculation of troops and general public alike should be aroused by the training of Canadian Combat Groups in combined operations in Pacific Command, and in view of the fact that Parliamentary sanction had recently been announced to permit the use of NRMA troops in the Aleutians, it is not surprising that the finger of rumour frequently pointed in that direction. Any security measures that were taken in the final analysis of necessity had to concentrate on concealing the specific destination and the exact time of embarkation of the Canadian troops. From the inception of Greenlight the strictest precaution was taken to ensure secrecy. A security plan drawn up by the GSO I (Int) Pac Comd (Lt-Col BR Mullaly) was put into effect and all officers received implicit instructions regarding the need for close adherence to the plan (64). The code name "Greenlight" was used at all times in referring to the projected operation. At all stages of the proceedings channels of communication between NDHQ and Pacific Command were restricted so that all correspondence was directed from CGS, AG, and QMG at Ottawa to the GOC-in-C, the BGS and the Brig i/c Admin. Pacific Command (65). It must be admitted that this blanket of secrecy piled a tremendous burden upon the shoulders of a very small staff, and resulted in a situation where many officers not in the picture could not properly appreciate the great urgency of the situation which made it necessary, for example, for the Ordnance Depot at Vancouver to work in shifts 24 hours a day, including Sundays.

67. Unit postal censorship supplemented by censorship of civilian mail was imposed at Nanaimo and Courtenay as from the 16 Jun, similar restrictions being instituted at Wainwright in order to divert attention from Greenlight (66). Telegraph censorship and monitoring of telephone messages to prevent all mention of military activities became effective in the embarkation areas four days before the boats sailed. Postal intercepts following the issue of American clothing and equipment revealed a wide variety of rumours current among the troops, with destinations estimated all the way from Chile to Alaska.

68. Personnel of the 13 Inf Bde Field Security Section, all specially selected, were distributed among units throughout the Force, while a Security Officer, of field rank, was appointed in each unit to lecture to ranks on security as an essential part of

training and to check and supervise unit security.

69. As part of the protective security plan a programme of deception was launched which included specially prepared press releases (67), the adoption of code names relating to the Southwest Pacific for each phase of training, unit lectures on tropical diseases and combined operations in Norway and the Mediterranean, and release of W/T messages in clear designed to give the impression that troops were returning to home stations on completion of training.

CONFINEMENT TO CAMP

70. The imposition of CB regulations and all personnel of Nanaimo Military Camp as from 1700 hours 8 Jul 43 was a security measure that found little favour among officers and men of the Greenlight Force (68). The order so added to the resentment felt at the refusal to grant embarkation leave, that, to lessen the danger to morale, the restriction was relaxed to allow soldiers' relatives and friends within camp boundaries. For four evenings in a row wives and sweethearts filled the camp, and the uncertainty of the imminent departure of their men made each successive night a new chapter in prolonging the agony of farewell.

SECURITY AT EMBARKATION

71. On the actual embarkation the protection and security of the dock areas and ships was made the responsibility of the DPM Pacific Command. Armed guards from 6 units were posted to prevent the close approach to the loading wharves of civilian and service personnel (69). "Gangway guards and ship guards were provided by the RCMP and a system of awarding passes was inaugurated for authorized personnel. A constant patrol of the waters adjacent to the ships and loading wharves was maintained by MLC's to ensure that no unauthorized ships, boats or persons approached. As each unit and detachment embarked an embarkation slip checked against the nominal roll and signed by the officer or NCO in charge was handed to the "Gangway" guard who again checked the number boarding the ship. The effect of all these precautions was that no unauthorized person had access to the transport ships at any time during the period of embarkation.

VII

DISCIPLINE

72. When the troop transports sailed from Vancouver Island 165 other ranks of Greenlight Force did not accompany them and were presumed to be AWL. Very few, if any of these cases occurred during the actual period of embarkation, most of them taking place during the period of mobilization which preceded it. As has been previously suggested, much of this absence could be traced to the dissatisfaction caused among those men who had been posted and in some cases re-posted from other units into the Greenlight Force, and who had had no opportunity to learn to know their officers and NCOs or to develop any esprit de corps in their new units. In this connection it is significant that the Regiment de Hull which had suffered less disruption of its other ranks than any other unit either from previous Overseas drafts or from inter-unit postings had at embarkation, according to records, only six men AWL while the other three Battalions had 42, 47 and 31 respectively (70).

73. Within a week of embarkation 45 absentees had been apprehended or had surrendered in various points. These "tourists" were despatched under escort via Seattle to rejoin their units (71). In the case of missing personnel who were apprehended at points too far distant to allow of immediate return to units, disciplinary action was taken at their respective District Depots.

74. It is unfortunate that the wildest rumours regarding embarkation were circulated. Allegations of the desertion of some 300 men and numerous officers, and forcing of troops on to the boats at the bayonet point and machine gun muzzle were circulated in various parts of the country, presumably finding their initiation in the fertile imaginations of those absentees who were not immediately apprehended (72).

VIII

MAINTENANCE

Weapons and Ammunition - Clothing, Equipment and Stores -
Accommodation - Reinforcements.

WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

75. The policy of maintenance of Greenlight Force dealt mainly with (a) weapons and ammunition of Canadian provision and (b) stores and equipment and supplies of United States provision (73). The scale of reserve weapons laid down by the General Staff provided for 42 per cent of war equipment, being six months' wastage at an intense rate of six per cent per month plus six months at the normal rate of one per cent per month (74). Of the weapons six per cent were despatched on the freighter "LILOA" that sailed for Adak from SPOE 25 Jun; 6 per cent formed part of the "basic load" put on board the combat ships at Seattle on 5 Jul; and the remaining 30 per cent were sent by the freighter "BURKE", which followed the main Force from Seattle on 15 Jul. This freighter also carried spare parts for Canadian weapons.

76. Reserve ammunition and training ammunition of a Canadian nature was provided on the scale laid down by General Staff, ie 10 to 15 times G 1098, plus a training quota. In order to guard against the possible loss of all the ammunition of the Force at sea or on the beaches during the operation it had been decided that a freighter, the "LILOA", should load at Seattle 25 per cent of the reserve ammunition plus a training quota, to precede the Force to Adak, the island designated as the Aleutian training area (75). The remaining 75 per cent reserve ammunition was combat loaded on the four transport ships at Seattle and formed part of the "basis load", which would be carried right through to the final place of disembarkation without being off-loaded at Adak. Demands for additional Canadian ammunition to replace expenditure were to be submitted by the Force Commander through United States channels to Western Defence Command, which would obtain supplies from Pacific Command for shipment through SPOE.

CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND STORES

77. Since no Canadian lines of communication were established articles of clothing and equipment of Canadian pattern were to be replaced by United States equivalents when they became unserviceable. However, such distinctive items of Canadian clothing as battle dress, berets, badges and insignia were to be replaced upon demand through the same channels as for Canadian ammunition (76).

.....

78. The maintenance of all other clothing and equipment, rations, stores, fuel, construction materials and ammunition (75-mm and 81-mm) became a matter of United States provision. With the exception of the last two items provision of these stores and supplies would be automatic (77). Thirty days' maintenance was loaded in the combat ships, and shipment of a further sixty days' maintenance was arranged for the freighter "BURKE". Provision of engineer construction materials was the responsibility of the Commander of the Amphibian Force, as was the maintenance of the United States ammunition subsequent to the units of fire already provided in the combat ships and shipped as a reserve on the later freighter.

79. It was planned that the accounting for these United States supplies would be made by assessment on a per capita basis against the Canadians by the United States, such assessment being based upon accurate strength returns from the Force. When stores were needed in addition to those automatically provided, they must be accounted for upon properly prepared United States shipping tickets, signed by United States issuing officers and by Canadian Army officers designated by the Brigade Commander to authorize such demands. These shipping tickets would be forwarded through DDOS, Pacific Command to NDHQ for final settlement (78). As will be seen later, certain developments in the unloading of stores at Kiska beaches necessitated a revision in the system of Canadian accountability as originally planned (79).

ACCOMMODATION

80. Accommodation at Adak and subsequently at Kiska was to be provided by United States authorities. Initially each man would be prepared to use his half-tent shelter until the United States pyramidal tents were available. A few Canadian marquees, tables folding, and tubs laundry were sent in the combat ships to improve accommodation. When the Canadians arrived at Adak, however, they found 750 pyramidal tents (6 men) and 40 large wall-tents ready for them to set up in their bivouac area (80).

REINFORCEMENTS

81. It was decided that no pool of reinforcements would be maintained in the theatre of operations. Replacements of important key personnel who became casualties would be despatched from Pacific Command. Units remaining for a long period of time in the Aleutians area or being reduced to non-effective status could be replaced by other units undergoing special training in Pacific Command. Behind the US component of ATF 9 were thousands of potential reinforcements based along the Aleutian Chain, but with the invading task force outnumbering the supposed defenders by an estimated three to one it appeared highly improbable that further support would be needed (81).

IX

EN ROUTE

The Convoy - Accommodation on Board - Daily Routine

THE CONVOY

82. The original plan to have the ships carrying the Canadian force form part of a larger convoy of US troop transports to Adak was modified, and the Greenlight convoy proceeded as an

.....

individual unit to the Aleutian port, accompanied initially by the Canadian minesweepers "OUTARDE" and "CHIGNECTO" (82). Off Discovery Island four protecting naval vessels joined the movement, the US destroyer "HATFIELD", the Canadian corvette "DAWSON", the US gunboat "CHARLESTON" and the US minesweeper "ORACLE" (83). Throughout the entire route the convoy was continuously in reach of land-based patrol planes, both Canadian and US (84), while US naval authorities stood ready to furnish additional escort on the approaches to Adak if any were deemed necessary (85). On the decks of the transport ships US personnel manned the naval and Anti-Aircraft guns, with Canadian details standing by to act as ammunition passers or gun crew replacements (86). Every man on board wore a lifebelt whenever he left his bunk (87), and daily boat drills instilled into all ranks the routine to be followed in an emergency (88).

ACCOMMODATION ON BOARD

83. Sleeping accommodation on the ships varied from the point of view of space available. The men slept in bunks fitted in tiers of four to the walls of the holds. Additional mattresses were laid on the tops of large hatchways that led to the cargo holds below. Officers and Warrant Officers, were provided with state-room berths, but Sergeants, except those aboard the "BRANCH", slept with the men in the holds. Most crowded of all was the "SACAJAWEA", especially on the final move from Adak. On that stage of the journey, with the return to 14 Combat Team of the 300 Canadian Fusiliers originally placed on the "PERIDA", together with additional personnel from the US port battalion, she carried 1651 all ranks. As her official berth space was but 954, increased to 1100 by the use of hatchway mattresses, the men aboard were forced to take their rest in shifts, an arrangement that brought many of them to Kiska weary from lack of sleep (89).

84. Troop Messes were operated by 14 and 16 Combat Teams aboard the "SACAJAWEA" and the "PERIDA" respectively, but the "BRANCH" and the "CHIRIKOFF", fitted out as Army Transport vessels provided their own commissariat. On the less crowded boats the men were fed in four or five shifts for each meal, and received three meals per day, but on the less favoured "SACAJAWEA" it was impossible to arrange for more than two meals a day (89). From 0700 hours to 1100 hours, and again from 1500 hours to 2030 hours a continuous procession passed through the small dining saloon, which could accommodate only 150 at a time. The food was good, and all ranks spoke enthusiastically in favour of their American rations.

DAILY ROUTINE

85. In the intervals between meals there was much to keep everybody busy. Training consisted mainly of indoctrination lectures in the dining room (except aboard the "SACAJAWEA") and the holds, special attention being given to "Know your Enemy". On the first day out from Nanaimo Brig Foster had withdrawn the veil of secrecy from the primary destination and the final objective, and detailed studies of maps of Adak and Kiska occupied the attention of officers and NCOs (90). Aboard the "BRANCH" the Brigadier held daily conferences as the lessons of Attu were examined, and members of Brigade Headquarters Staff studied the aspects of their particular jobs. Every effort was made, through PT classes on deck to maintain the high peak of physical condition achieved on Vancouver Island (91).

86. Whenever men's time is usefully employed morale generally remains high. Their programme of daily training, together with

their turns at the various ship's duties for which they were made responsible (92), served to keep the men well occupied and concerts arranged by the ships' padres provided excellent entertainment, but it is doubtful whether any single factor made a greater contribution to the morale than the discovery that cigarettes could be bought at the PX (Post Exchange, or US Canteen) for 45 cents a carton of 200, and that chocolate bars were correspondingly cheap (93). The advance of five dollars US funds per man paid on board was fully appreciated by all.

87. A week on board passed quickly by. For the great majority of the Greenlight Force, brought from prairie homes or inland towns and cities this was their first sea voyage. The weather was kind, and sailing was smooth, but there was no regret when the sight of land on July 20 brought the prospect of early relief from the inconvenience of cramped quarters aboard ship (91).

X

TRAINING

Physical Conditioning - Combined Operations - Specialist Training - US Courses of Instruction.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

88. Training of the Greenlight Force at Nanaimo and Courtenay under Brig DR Sargent, and later Brig HW Foster, was limited in time but intensive in character. A careful scrutiny of each man's record of service had been followed by the elimination from the Force of all who had not completed four months' basic training (94), and for the three weeks' period that was available between the time of organization of combat teams and embarkation, the Brigade Group concentrated upon special-to-arm and Combined Operations training. At all times emphasis was laid upon the offensive, and schemes were designed as operations "against an enemy stubborn and unyielding". Of primary importance were these objectives: (i) Perfect physical fitness of each officer and man, and (ii) an exact knowledge and proficiency in the handling of weapons (95).

89. One of the lessons learned from operations at Attu was the need for this physical hardening of the highest order "in order that all troops might be capable of conducting offensive operations continuously day and night as long as they were in the assault" (96). To meet this requirement Greenlight's training schedule included an adequate conditioning programme which sent all ranks over the obstacle course on the Tsolum River, down the scramble nets at Royston, and up the face of the cliffs at Balmoral Beach (97). Troops were required to carry five pounds of sand in small packs, to keep their water bottles filled, and to move at the double at all times, - an order which brought from one unit diarist the wry complaint: "another long day galloping madly about with a pack-horse load of sand and water" (98). The process of hardening was successfully carried to completion, and its fruits were seen in the splendid physical condition that enabled our men to meet the exacting demands made upon their stamina by the hostile weather and terrain of Great Sitkin and Kiska.

COMBINED OPERATIONS

90. For two of the combat teams only, the 15th and 16th, did time permit a combined scheme in field firing prior to embarkation. These schemes were held at Oyster River, and afforded an opportunity for all infantry weapons to be fired in conjunction with the machine guns of the Saint John Fusiliers and the 25-pdrs of the 24 Field Regt (99). Attu had shown the Japanese dislike for artillery fire (100), and such rehearsals as the Oyster River schemes were designed to impress infantry commanders with the importance of calling for and using fire support from the heavier weapons. The second of these exercises, held on 29 Jun, was observed by the GOC-in-C during an inspection of Greenlight training. What he saw enabled Gen Pearkes to despatch a wire to NDHQ to the effect that the state of training of the Force was satisfactory (101).

SPECIALIST TRAINING

91. The 24 Field Coy RCE, isolated at Comox until embarkation time as a result of a case of suspected meningitis, had no opportunity of training with the combat teams until Adak was reached (102). Fortunately the specialized nature of their work lessened the disadvantage of this enforced segregation, and the fullest use was made of the limited time available. In preparation for the engineers' anticipated role in shore operations the training programme concentrated upon beach clearing and road building, demolition, the detection and neutralization of mines and booby traps, accompanied by a course in physical hardening in which cliff scaling played a conspicuous part. Two days' driving practice with caterpillar tractors was the prelude to a later extensive period of experience with D-6 "cat" and bulldozer at Adak and Kiska, as the transport personnel rapidly caught the infectious enthusiasm with which the US "dozer" operator attacks every hill in sight (103).

92. The twofold training problem faced by the 24 Field Regiment RCA was that of bringing new reinforcements to uniform standard with the rest of the men, and of gaining experience with the new US 75-mm howitzers. The unit commander has yet to be found who feels that his incoming drafts comprise the best trained men that their former unit could supply, and the story of Greenlight mobilization appears to have provided no exception. A judicious distribution of new personnel throughout the different batteries made possible a leavening process which enabled all guns to be effectively manned. While only two batteries participated in the Oyster River scheme prior to embarkation, opportunities for firing occurred later at Adak and Great Sitkin, and all personnel qualified on both Canadian and US pieces (104).

93. As with the ground artillery the problem of the 46 Light AA Battery consisted of becoming accustomed to new equipment. Predictors were used for the first time at Nanaimo, personnel getting a week's practice with them. The crews gained further valuable experience at Adak as they sighted on hundreds of planes continually flying over the harbour. One of the chief objections to the employment of this new equipment was its weight. Each predictor set weighed over 300 lbs, a difficult six man-load on the uncertain footing of the Aleutian hills. The arrival at Kiska of British made Stiffkey Stick sets at the end of September provided the battery with a piece of equipment much preferred to the predictors (105).

US COURSES OF INSTRUCTION

94. The role of Greenlight as a force operating with American troops on an American organization basis made it highly desirable that Canadian representatives should receive special US training. To this end selected Officers and NCOs participated in various courses in the United States and American instructors were brought to Canada. Eight officers and thirteen NCOs attending Maj Tracey's transport and quartermaster course at Nanaimo proceeded to Seattle for five days to learn the system of loading (106). Four NCOs from 24 Field Regt RCA were despatched to HQ Amphibious Training Force 9, at Fort Orde for special instruction in the use of the US 75-mm pack howitzer (107). An officer from each infantry battalion, 25 Field Ambulance, and Brigade HQ, attended an intelligence course at Fort Orde, where they observed various phases of amphibious training and familiarized themselves with the lessons learnt at Attu, as well as gaining experience in the use of Japanese weapons (108). From Le Regiment de Hull, charged with the provision of beach teams, four lieutenants went to a Shore Course at San Diego to learn the US system of handling beach parties and the procedure in controlling the fire of naval guns (109).

XI

ADAK

Accommodation - Training - Great Sitkin Exercise -
Preparations for the Final Move

ACCOMMODATION

95. The Canadian convoy anchored in Adak Harbour on the evening of 20 July (110), and disembarkation began at an early hour next morning (111). As the troops marched towards their bivouac area, two and half miles back in the hills that enclosed Kuluk Bay, they were informally greeted by hundreds of American sailors and soldiers along the way. They looked at the treeless hills, that somehow seemed much steeper than they had appeared from the boat, and for the first time they saw Aleutian tundra. Before they left the island they were to learn from bitter experience what it was to walk, battle loaded, upon this same tundra. "Tundra" as one diarist put it, "is a crisscross matting of about twenty different kinds of grass, moss, and small wiry plants, which is laid upon a soft clay, which in turn rests upon a subsoil of soft volcanic ash. Walk on a Flexsteel mattress covered with grass and you can enjoy tundra in the security of your own home" (112).

96. Characteristic of the co-operation exhibited by the US authorities was the fact that the bivouac area selected for the use of the Canadians was probably the best allotted to any formation of ATF 9. Maj RJ Bolton, who with Capt Golding had preceded the Greenlight Force to Adak in a liaison capacity, was able to report the provision of 750 pyramidal tents, with supplies of rations, coal and wood, fuel oil and gasoline available in the Canadian area (80). All day long the olive green tents were popping up over the Canadian valley, as units, forewarned of the unpleasant nature of Aleutian weather, put forth every effort to gain protection from the expected rain. At the express wish of the Commanding General, tents were placed in an uneven pattern,

.....

deliberately avoiding the orderly arrangement in rows that would have eased the task of raiding enemy aircraft.

97. The stay of a month originally planned for Adak was reduced to three weeks, and advantage was taken of every minute to push the training of forward and beach combat teams to completion (113). A week of comparatively fine weather found all personnel reaching up into the hills, pounding away at the spongy surface of the tundra covered mountain sides, building up the new muscles needed to tackle cross country movement in the tough Aleutian terrain (114). The engineers got in some valuable practice with the US bulldozers, assisting their temporary hosts in some road construction (103). Signals personnel, who had not had an opportunity of working with newly issued US equipment at Nanaimo, were now busily employed practising with the new sets, and rehearsing with the Brigade Staff tactical exercises in the field (115).

GREAT SITKIN EXERCISE

98. By far the most valuable combined training in which the Greenlight Force participated prior to the Kiska landing was the Great Sitkin exercise conducted during the first week of August (116). In planning and conducting the operation every effort was made to simulate the conditions of the Force's main objective, and as a result the many lessons learned as the exercise developed were to prove invaluable to all services in ironing out various wrinkles before the final move.

99. Sailing from Adak in a small convoy on the morning of 3 August, the Canadian troops reached the transport area of Ulak Island in a few hours, and from there disembarked into the landing barges for the 50-minute run into the Great Sitkin beach. A steep surf and heavy wind gave a foretaste of what might be expected in poor landing conditions, and the sight of two of their barges grounded and broken by the sea reminded the participating troops that they were engaged in no child's play (117).

100. For 48 hours the troops stayed on the island carrying out their allotted tasks and for half of that time they were exposed to the miseries of rain, fog and mist. Men learned that a carelessly fastened poncho or a rucksack left uncovered during the night resulted in a soaked sleeping bag or sodden clothing next morning (118). Nowhere and at no time during the entire Greenlight adventure did the opposition of weather and terrain surpass in aggressiveness that encountered on Great Sitkin, and in self-defence the Canadian soldier was rapidly learning the most important lesson that Greenlight taught him, to be able to look after himself. The return to Adak on 7 Aug afforded another opportunity to practise a tactical landing (119). The weather continued to be bad, and at the end of the eight-mile march from the beach the troops found the Canadian camp a sea of mud (120).

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FINAL MOVE

101. There was little time for resting. From the Brigade Commander, busy with his staff preparing for the final operation and administrative orders, down to the private soldier cleaning his weapon and trying to wash the mud out of his clothes, all were fully occupied getting ready for the move to Kiska. Actually there was not enough time to put into effect all the adjustments and improvements that experience at Great Sitkin recommended. A few extra days would have meant much to sorely harassed administrative officers as they tried to work out last minute details while office boxes were being packed for loading (121). Ordnance personnel worked like demons resorting and classifying various

.....

types of stores; TQM's put finishing touches to their loading plans; and ship's adjutants worried their passenger list into shape to accommodate the extra US personnel who were to join the Force on leaving Adak (86). Among the troops "A" and "B" bags were packed for shipment as Combat Team Commanders issued instructions that men would embark equipped for battle. A single K-ration and a D-ration were issued to all ranks with the warning that these must suffice them for their first two days on Kiska (122). But shipboard appetites are often keen, and what could be more appetising for a midnight snack than the tasty chocolate of a D-ration?

XII

THE FINAL MOVE

Embarkation at Adak - Authority to Proceed - Through the Fog to Kiska.

EMBARKATION AT ADAK

102. Embarkation at Adak began on August 9, three days after the return from the Great Sitkin exercise, and continued to the 11, when the "BRANCH" and "CHIRIKOFF" were loaded (123). One by one the units of the various combat teams formed up in full marching order and moved down the muddy roads to the harbour. Burdened as they were with the bulky gear of American troops, the Canadians nevertheless presented a striking appearance of uniform orderliness as they marched smartly and cheerfully on to the Army Dock.

103. Here a scene of almost indescribable activity met the eye. Mountains of material, rows of guns and heavy vehicles, stacks of ammunition, thousands of rations, were being stored aboard barges for transports lying at anchor in the stream, or being loaded directly into the holds and on to the decks of ships berthed at the sturdy wharves. This was the fourth embarkation of men and cargo, and the experience gained from the previous loadings was evident in the precision that characterized the performance of the tremendous task.

104. Advance HQ Pacific Command had opened at Adak on 7 Aug, (124), and down to the dock on the third day came the GOC-in-C accompanied by Gen De Witt and Gen Buckner, Commanding Generals of Western Defence Command and Alaska Defence Command, all intently interested in the progress of this experiment to use Canadian and American troops together in combined operations. For more than two hours Gen Pearkes stood near the gang plank of the "CHIRIKOFF", speaking personally to several hundred of his men and cheering them with his obvious interest in their well-being and the success of their undertaking (125).

105. Late in the afternoon of the 11th the "CHIRIKOFF" and the "BRANCH" moved slowly out from the dock to join the "SACAJAWEA" and the "PERIDA" in Kuluk Bay. All types of craft crowded the harbour, from big battleships and transports to the long grey hulls of LSTs, - in all about 60 vessels riding outside the submarine boom in the busy bay (126).

106. For two days more they waited off Adak while officers and men settled down once again into quarters that had become more crowded than ever with the addition of further US personnel (127). Commanding officers and their staffs familiarized themselves with

.....