

It is of the utmost importance that similar uncertainty should be avoided in any future operation and that Flotilla Officers should be thoroughly trained.

48. *Scramble Landings.* Landing craft for RED 1, 2, 3 and 4 Beaches were very late in getting away from AWATEA, and one group had to be left behind. A number of craft lost touch with the escorting motor launch on the way inshore, in spite of reductions of speed. Troops were landed at Bains Romans and various beaches to the west. The two craft detailed for RED 1 Beach found their objective unaided, though 1½ hours late. Six landing craft approached the Ilot de la Marine, some two miles south-east of their intended beach, and came under heavy fire. Four were sunk and the remaining two withdrew.

49. *C Sector.* Owing to the delay in the receipt of orders some confusion arose as to the beaches to be used. The pilotage party were only briefed for Ain Taya beach whereas the use of three beaches was contemplated.

A short conference was held in U.S.S. SAMUEL CHASE where it was decided that M.L. 273 should take a flight to C BLUE, the original beach; that M.L. 295 should lead a flight to C RED Beach, keeping station on the port quarter of M.L. 273 until reaching Bordelaise Rock, where they would break off; and that the pilot in Flotilla leader's craft should lead the Commando flight to C GREEN for the assault on Matifou.

Owing to delay in forming up, the assault flights for C BLUE and RED Beaches did not leave until H hour - 50 minutes. At Bordelaise Rock, M.L. 295 attempted to lead off the craft for C RED, but they all continued to follow M.L. 273 to C BLUE, where they touched down at H hour + 25 minutes. Several craft for C GREEN were also mixed up in this flight, including those with ammunition for the Commando at C GREEN.

The flights for C GREEN were not finally loaded and assembled until H hour - 15 minutes, and as the convoy had by now drifted some 4 or 5 miles from its release position they did not touch down at C GREEN Beach until H hour + 1 hour 50 minutes.

50. *General.* Generally speaking all landings were hampered by the unfortunate necessity of long delays in lowering craft and forming up into flotillas. The obvious solution to this is that all L.S.I.s carry sufficient landing craft to embark their own first flight and that these landing craft be lowered with their full load.

All landings, except that at Ilot de la Marine, were effected without opposition, which was fortunate, as, had there been any serious naval or military opposition, the confusion which arose at B and C Sectors might well have been disastrous.

51. At 0040, the ships of the slow convoy K.M.S.A. 1 began to arrive at B Sector, where H.M.S. BULOLO was lying, and they arrived at the correct times at the release positions of A and C Sectors.

52. At A Sector the L.S.I. of the fast convoy started to close the beach at 0100, the slow convoy following them in. Owing to the drift from proper release positions ships were not

finally anchored until 0356. The ferry service then began to operate satisfactorily.

53. At 0130, as Cap Matifou battery showed no signs of activity, S.N.O.L. (C) moved his L.S.I. in to within 4,000 yards of the beach. At 0200, searchlights from the battery picked up and held H.M.S. ZETLAND, but neither side opened fire. H.M.S. ZETLAND turned away and made smoke and the transports were not illuminated. At 0340, ZETLAND was again picked up by this searchlight, and Cap Matifou battery opened fire on the westward transports. ZETLAND closed the battery and opened fire on the searchlight, which went out showing a glow as though it had been hit. At 0400, ZETLAND was picked up by another searchlight and the battery again opened fire. ZETLAND closed the battery, dealing successfully with this searchlight too.

54. At 0131, I ordered H.M. Ships BROKE and MALCOLM to carry out Operation "Terminal".*

55. At 0237, information was received that Sidi Ferruch Fort had been captured without opposition, and I ordered KEREN and the ships at B Sector to close B WHITE Beach. Ships had by now drifted some 7 miles to the south-westward, and it took them over 2 hours to reach the anchorage. Once anchored, the ferrying of personnel ashore proceeded rapidly.

56. By 0515 D day, the information received in H.Q. Ship was as follows:—

0131 From C.E.N.T.F.†—BROKE and MALCOLM proceed in execution of previous orders.

0159 Landing B WHITE successful.

0220 Signal station A GREEN open—nothing to report.

0220 From BROKE—MALCOLM in company and proceeding.

0223 Landing successful B GREEN.

0225 S.N.O.L.(C)—1st and 2nd wave landed, am closing beach.

0237 Sidi Ferruch and infra-red installations captured.

0238 S.N.O.L.(B)—Loaded M.T. very slow due to conditions.

0246 C.E.N.T.F. to KEREN—Close beach as convenient; sweep B will not be carried out.

0246 S.N.O.L.(A)—L.S.I. anchored A WHITE. Landing delayed by swell. Assault flight landed 0147.

0257 S.N.O.L.(B)—B GREEN and WHITE landings successful. Sidi Ferruch captured. No RED Beach report.

0255 A Sector—No resistance reported so far.

0301 S.N.O.L.(C)—Am under way, all quiet here.

0315 Flares bearing 045° to seaward. Possibly BROKE and MALCOLM.

0327 S.N.O.L.(C)—Landing successful. Beach secure. No report from troops inland.

0332 B RED SCRAMBLES—Two forts captured.

0335 S.N.O.L.(B)—Ships are closing the beaches now.

0344 S.N.O.L.(B)—Division 1 close beaches. KEREN's speed 8 knots. Division 2 and 3 follow.

Admiralty footnotes:—

* See paragraph 11.

† C.E.N.T.F.—Commander Eastern Naval Task Force.