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24/AAI/1/4 (Hist)

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

6 Jul 44.

CANADIAN OPERATIONS - MEDITERRANEAN AREA
Extracts from Memoranda (Series 21)

1. Further to my 24/AAI/1/4 (Hist), dated 29 Jun 44, attached are further extracts from Memoranda forwarded by Historical Officers dealing with the operations of Canadian Formations and units in the Mediterranean Area.
2. These extracts contain further information concerning Canadian participation in the offensive which began 11 May 44.
3. These extracts are circulated for general information only, and opinions stated are not to be considered as necessarily expressions of official doctrine.

(K. Stuart) Lieut.-General,
Chief of Staff,
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS.

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CANADIAN OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

MAY, 1944

EXTRACTS FROM MEMORANDA

(SERIES 21)

1. EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF OC 3 CDN ARMD
RECCE REGT (G.G.H.G.) ON OPERATIONS
24 - 30 MAY 44

(During the breaking of the ADOLF HITLER LINE and the advance up to and beyond the MELFA and LIRI Rivers, 3 Cdn Armd Recce Regt was employed for seven days in a flank protection role. "Up to three sqns were engaged in fighting both day and night almost continuously throughout this operation.")

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Lessons:

- (a) Tactical - Throughout this operation the tactical tp drills that had been worked out and practised during exercises and training, proved to be very satisfactory and as far as can be seen, completely sound.
 - (i) Use of .5 on Stuart Tks - This proved to be an excellent weapon and extremely effective, particularly when loaded with HE, Incend, Trac and AP. A Drill on the firing of this that proved very effective was the Bow Gunner taking over and firing while the .5 was having its belts changed. Once personnel got over any feeling of exposure by standing up to fire this gun, they found it to be excellent and the shoulder control that had been mocked up and installed on all guns proved eminently satisfactory.
 - (ii) Gunnery - The high percentage of AP that was received in the tks when we got them, was prior to the battle thought to be too high, but sqns report that this high percentage of AP is very useful, as the AP is extremely useful for working against houses, particularly to find out if the house is occupied. A round or so of HE fired inside after the AP has knocked a hole, proves eminently satisfactory.
 - (iii) Crew Drill - The giving of gun control to the gunners did not prove at all satisfactory, as when the gunner was controlling his gun in the turret, he could not see trees coming and a number of traverse spindles (3) were broken by the guns hitting trees when the gunner was working on gun control, consequently the practice of giving gun control, has been discontinued by us.
 - (iv) Smoke - Smoke was used in a number of cases, particularly to blind MG posns while tks were going through difficult going, also during repair work. I do not feel that we used smoke to quite as good advantage as it might be used and this is being dealt with in discussions.....

(vi) Comd - It was proved from experience in a number of cases that it is essential for a Comd, particularly a Sqn Comd, to remain at his HQ and maintain control all the time during the battle and it is necessary to resist the temptation to go fwd to look and see what is going on. This possibility applies to our Sqns more than any other unit as they are working on such a wide front, it is impossible for a Sqn Comd to see his tps while they are working and it has to be largely controlled from a map (like playing chess).

2 (a)(vii) Passing of Infm - After the first day, the passing of infm improved considerably and I felt that our systems worked out during trg are quite satisfactory and will work now that personnel have got over the initial tenseness of the first battle. Within Sqn HQ it has been found more satisfactory to have the Sqn 2 i/c keep a log and to be responsible for passing back infm. Also it is a great help if sqns receive as much infm as possible about what is going on with tps in other parts of the battle. The passing of negative infm as well as positive has been of great value to the HQ. This should be done at least every 30 minutes while tps are actually engaging. The operation of Regimental HQ proved reasonably satisfactory and should work quite satisfactorily in an advance and operating as a Recce Regt. The big point to be remembered here is that if the Comd is with the GOC and passing the infm direct to him, this same infm has to be passed back through the normal channels to the G Staff at Main Divisional HQ. The control and so forth for the operation of HQ as worked out on exercises in England during the past two years have proved to be quite satisfactory, but also it is brought out here that after the battle has once started, the Regimental Comd should also remain at his HQ and control the battle.

(viii) Binoculars - It would be of very great assistance, and all tp ldrs have mentioned it, for high-powered binoculars to be supplied to tp ldrs as it has proved to be very beneficial to spend a good deal of time searching the country with binoculars before moving fwd to the next bound.

(ix) Camouflage - The camouflage of tks and particularly of the gun barrels proved to be of great advantage and it is quite possible that our low number of casualties was to a great extent due to the camouflage, as it was found that the Germans did not fire unless they could see something to fire at. Also the siting of Sqn HQ in a defiladed posn was brought home very forcibly in two or three cases.

(x) Remote Control Sets - The using of the remote control sets to an OP proved to be very useful and if these remote control sets could be issued on the scale down to tps, it would help a lot.

(xi) Disabled or Bugged Down Tks - When tks are bogged down or temporarily disabled under enemy fire, it is necessary to leave at least two of the crew in a posn of observation where they can see the tk continuously as it was found on two different occasions where tks had to be evacuated under fire and recovered the following

day, that where personnel had not been left to watch the tks, our own tps of another fm had stripped the tks completely of all personal eqpt, etc.....

- (xii) Target Area Numbers - The system of using target area numbers proved to be of very great value and in our opinion, should be done well ahead so that all tps may have these target area ref numbers marked on their maps well ahead of time.
- (xiii) Assault Tp - The assault Tp in each Sqn is undoubtedly of very great value, but working as we were in this operation, across the grain, not only to the country, but also to the rds, the White Set Cars did not prove capable of getting through and it is suggested that possibly operating in this type of country, 7 carriers per assault tp rather than 4 White Set Cars would be considerably more valuable. If working on rd centre lines in a recce role, this possibly would not be as serious a drawback.
- (xiv) Fatigue - It is common knowledge that a recce regt can expect to have to operate for longer periods of time than most other armed units. In this operation of 7 days most sqns were in operations for approximately four days and nights and I feel that this is about the maximum that can be expected and still retain efficient operation.
- (xv) Siting of HQ and unengaged Tps - It is recommended that HQ and any tps that are not actively engaged or fighting, whenever possible be sited outside of mortar range, as practically all our casualties were caused from mortar fire when tps were in harbour or laager and Regimental HQ which was sited in all cases just out of mortar range received no casualties at all.....
- (xvii) Booby Trapping of German Dead - We have run into two cases where German corpses have been booby-trapped.

(b) Adm Lessons

- (i) Supply of Petrol - The system and supply worked out quite satisfactorily and there were no cases of a sqn being unable to operate because of lack of petrol. During this operation there were no petrol lorries moving with sqns and when there is so much mortar and shell fire it appears to be much better to keep the supply vehs under regimental control and send them up to sqns when required. There were no petrol or amn lorries destroyed by enemy action throughout this operation. One tech stores lorry received a direct hit, it being the only B veh casualty. The lack of funnels for topping up the tks proved a very serious problem and every effort should be made to obtain some type of funnel, preferably the screw-in type of the Americans on a scale of at least one per tk.
- (2 (b) (ii) Amn p The small amount of amn used throughout this operation surprised everyone and as all the amn trucks were overloaded, we feel that it would be much better to cut down on the scale of amn, so that trucks would not be overloaded and run the risks of breakdown that overloaded vehs do. The loading of the .5 belts with HE and Incend as well as Trac and AP, is very strongly recommended as all tps report the HE and incend have a very marked effect on the morale of the Germans, including Paratroopers.

Rations - The supply of rations proved satisfactory as there were no cases of tps not eating a good meal at least once a day. The pack, or compo, ration is much better for operations and every effort should be made to obtain these if at all possible. With regard to the fresh rations, it was found that tps when fighting, eat considerably more than when not fighting and the scale that we have found to be approximately right is a 50% overdraw of rations for the personnel that are actually engaged in fighting. This would amount to the regimental amount of an overdraw of 250 if the regt was completely committed. This I believe to be essential for fighting efficiency. Another point is that oatmeal should be issued every day and not just a few times a week and as much bulk should be included in the rations as possible.

- (iv) Water - Our WE of one water truck per sqn proved to be absolutely essential. The water situation was satisfactory, but could not have been maintained on any less scale of vehs.
- (v) Mail - The mail came up very well throughout the operation and the receiving of letters in a fight certainly is a great boost for morale.
- (vi) Returns - The system of making returns appears to be satisfactory as to date we have heard no complaints with regard to getting in of returns. The only point on this is that it is essential that estimates be sent in if actual figures are not available and the estimates that we sent in proved to be sufficiently accurate for all purposes, as it is practically impossible to get an accurate figure during the early evening hrs while we are still in action. In order to assist the sqns we are working out a coded adm sitrep form that will cut down on the adm traffic on the air.
- (vii) Medical - The evacuation of casualties proved to work out in actual practice alright, the Stuart tks being used in a great many cases for the evacuation of casualties, and I would recommend that if possible, the Stuart tk would be a better veh than the White set car for the medical veh in the sqns.
- (viii) Burials - The system of reporting fatal casualties to the Padre and his looking after all the details of burying and making out the reports proved to be quite satisfactory.
- (ix) Rec - The rec tks, although the ones we used are just Shermans with additional rec eqpt, worked very well and all tks were recovered and back on the rd the following day.
- (x) Intercomn - The wireless nets and the wireless diagrams that we have worked out appear to be satisfactory and no changes can be thought of that would improve this at all.

2. A RECCE TROOP AT THE CROSSING OF THE MELFA:
ACCOUNT BY LIEUT H J PERKINS, Ld S H, AS
GIVEN TO HIST OFFR 5 CDN ARMD DIV

1. The recce troop of an armoured regiment consists of eleven light American General Stuart or "Honey" tanks. From these the turrets have been removed and instead is mounted a .5 Browning machine gun. The crew of the vehicle is five and its fire power includes besides the .5 a .30 Browning, a Bren gun, a PIAT and four Tommies. We also carry prepared charges and grenades. In small arms weapons our fire power per man is as large as any force in the army. Our job is close recce both of ground and of the enemy which we are prepared to do either from our vehicles or on foot.
2. For the MELFA crossing six of my tanks were taken for use by engineers who were travelling with us and my troop consisted of only five tanks. As a matter of fact, my own tank had a mechanical failure soon after we crossed the start line and I had to switch to my sergeant's tank. At no time during the operation did the troop consist of more than four tanks carrying in all twenty men.
3. The plan of the operation was that a force commanded by Lt-Col Vokes of the BCD and including the Irish Regiment of Canada was to push through the gap in the Adolph Hitler Line which had been made by 1st Canadian Division. They were to advance about 2000 yards and then form a strong point or "firm base". My regiment was to go through this strong point and advance the remaining 4000 yards to the MELFA. We were then to seize a crossing and to hold it while other troops passed over and continued the advance. My job was to lead the regiment during the advance, to get to the river as quickly as possible, find the crossing and get over. The CO would then push over "A" Company of the motor battalion who were under his command, and if possible get a tank squadron over, although whether this last would be possible was not certain.
4. The VOKES force pushed over the start line at 0600 hrs. At 0800 hrs the CO sent me forward to liaise with them and to find out what was happening. I found that while the preceding units were not encountering great opposition from the enemy, they were having considerable difficulty in getting their tanks forward over many obstacles and the rate of advance was consequently slow. I spent most of the morning reporting progress to my CO who was impatiently waiting in the assembly area two or three thousand yards back.
5. At about 1130 hrs we got orders to move forward. Progress was still very slow both because of the many defiles and the congestion on the road We started to pass through the BOD tanks many of which were firing but at what I could not see. Eventually at about 1340 hrs we were clear of them and on our own.
6. I headed straight up the centre line. The country was close and visibility limited. It was not very easy to map-read, but I had a good set of air photographs and never had any trouble in keeping track of my position. The first enemy I saw was about a thousand yards from the BCD. A half-track was parked behind a house with its crew around it. My troop opened fire on the crew who tried to run for it. Five were hit and two apparently managed to get away. About 2000 yards further on a PANTHER tank suddenly came across my right front travelling very quickly and at a range of about 300 yds. The crew commander was standing in the turret with most of his chest exposed. I immediately opened up on him with my .5 Browning and had the satisfaction of seeing him slump forward out of his cupola...

- made no effort to retaliate and I kept going forward as fast as I could. A little further on I saw two more tanks to the left. I heard "A" Sqn getting ready for them over the wireless and so I kept on going. Apparently they did not see me for they did not fire. As we came close to the river bank I saw a house in which there was movement. We immediately opened up on it. A few seconds later a white flag appeared at one of the windows to be followed when our fire ceased by eight Germans with their hands up. I could not be bothered by prisoners, so I waited a few seconds until a carrier from a scout platoon of the motor bn which was working with "A" Sqn came up. I turned the prisoners over to the carrier's crew and then pushed on to the river bank. We reached it at about 1500 hrs.
6. When we were planning the operation the C O and I studied the ground by means of air photographs. We found at least two possible crossings, and of these we deliberately chose the most difficult for the initial crossing, since it was far less likely to be defended. The plan was that "C" Sqn on the left would later try the other crossing, but before this part of the plot could be put into effect, they became involved in a major tank battle. It turned out that the best crossing was effectively covered by many A. Tk weapons but the one we had chosen was virtually undefended.
7. By this time one of my tanks had become lost in the difficult country and there were only three left. I parked them under cover and dismounted with Sgt Macey to carry out a recce of the crossing. We posted three men with Bren guns to cover us and began our search. Towards the left the bank was impassable, but about 75 yards to the right there was a sort of ledge leading down into the river bed. This was very steep and difficult but still passable to tanks. All along the river bank were well prepared enemy positions, which we searched as we went along. The enemy had obviously vacated them in great haste as there was kit and equipment lying about in profusion. Sgt Macey and I climbed down into the stream bed and up the far bank. As we did so we came under Spandau fire from the right and one of the Bren gunners was shot in the shoulder. This was the only casualty of the whole operation. Sgt Macey and I got across safely and into cover on the far side. At this point we came under co-ax fire from an "A" Sqn tank as "A" Sqn had now come up to the river bank to support us.....
8. The track on the far side was even more difficult than that on the near side. I decided, however, that it could be made passable, though hard work would be necessary. I remained on the far bank to guide the tanks up it while Sergeant Macey returned to guide them down the near bank. The crossing was successfully completed one tank at a time, but getting up the far bank required a certain amount of field engineering. I sent two men with Bren guns up on top of the bank to cover us while the remaining thirteen went to work. There was an obstructing bank upon which we exploded three prepared charges. It was also necessary to widen the track in one place, and to do this we built a sort of retaining wall using several trunks and then filled up the gap with dirt. We did some furious work with pick and shovel, which if not the soldier's favourite weapons are among the most useful which he has. In retrospect I think this was the most ticklish part of the whole business. While we were not actually under fire we knew that the enemy must have an idea of what we were about and might be expected to do something quickly. Everything depended on speed..... In an amazingly short time the job was finished.
9. We got the tanks up the track and into a hull down position below the bank. About a hundred yards to my left was a house showing signs of enemy occupation. I decided that our first task must be to capture that. Myself Sgt Macey and three men carrying two tommyes and a Bren gun crept along under cover of the bank and

approached the house from its back door so to speak. As I rushed through the court-yard and into the house I saw eight paratroopers staring through windows and loopholes in the direction of the other crossing, the one which we had decided not to use. I shouted "Drop it", and they turned around in considerable astonishment. They were big well-built men armed to the teeth and for a moment I didn't know what was going to happen. My trigger finger itched but I did not open fire. Suddenly one dropped his rifle to be followed by all the others and their hands rose in sullen astonishment. There was one officer, one NCO and six other ranks. A search of the house revealed no more. Obviously they had expected us to attack the main crossing and were unprepared for this unexpected development.

10. I immediately got the position organized for defence. The three tanks were brought into a hull-down position on the right of the house and we dismounted some of the smaller weapons for all-round defence. I sent one man back with the prisoners and also Sgt Macey to guide "A" Sqn across. The remaining thirteen of us were painfully few for the task in hand. All of this had taken about 30 minutes from the time we first reached the river bank.
11. The enemy had seen us taking the prisoners out and was now turning his attention to us. A sniper in a tree about 150 yds away opened up, and although he was an astonishingly poor shot, he was nevertheless very annoying. I fired two shots at him from a PIAT and the second one exploded in the branches. His rifle fell to the ground and the sniper slumped across a branch like a bag of grain.
12. So far the operation was going quite successfully. I had seized the bridgehead and could now expect to be reinforced by "A" Coy Westmr Regt, hard on whose heels would be the remainder of the battalion. Unfortunately, the route taken by the tracked vehicles proved impractical for the White Scout Cars of the motor coy. The engineers did not get a route forward as quickly as had been expected, and it was necessary for the motor coy to feel its way forward over difficult going in the face of artillery and small arms fire. It was apparent that I would have to hold on by myself for some considerable time. The original idea had been to get "A" Sqn across as quickly as possible....about this time, however, two PANTHERS and an SP 88 made their appearance to my left, that is the EAST, the closest being about 400 yds away. They began a slow rate of fire with H E on the house I was occupying. Fortunately none of these did any damage but the position was definitely becoming very warm. The tanks and SP turned the bulk of their attention to "A" Sqn on the far bank and started to cause damage in squadron headquarters and the two rear troops. It was apparent that "A" Sqn was suffering heavily and increasingly doubtful whether they could cross the river. I could see from "A" Sqn's reply to the fire that they had not located the source of the trouble, particularly the 88mm which was causing particular damage. I therefore turned over command to Cpl McLean and re-crossed the river with the object of pointing out the target to "A" Sqn. I stood on the back of first Capt Whittle's, and later Lieut MacKinnon's tanks, while they tried to knock out the target. Either because they were unable to identify the target or because the range was too long, they were unsuccessful. I then returned across the river.
13. It was about this time Sgt Macey returned. He also realized that "A" Sqn would be unable to cross but he had found my tank which Sgt Lofvendahl had managed to repair and brought it over the river. I did not bring it up the bank but placed it some distance below the crest as a rallying point in case we were forced out of our position. The situation was now becoming very difficult.

14. There was a house on our left about 150 or 200 yards away. Spandau fire came from the house at intervals and about twenty infantry were observed in the vicinity. I felt certain the enemy was concentrating in order to wipe out our small bridgehead and kept up a heavy fire from small arms, particularly the .5s with the object of confusing him as to our strength. We had the satisfaction of causing him at least a few casualties, including two hit by .5s. I would have liked to make use of the PIAT, but decided to conserve ammunition in case of an attack by the enemy tanks. These were moving about considerably and from time to time were turning their attention on us. Nearly all of their shots were high and the shells were exploding about 50 yards behind us, and by great good fortune causing no casualties. There was no doubt that if the enemy chose to employ his tanks and infantry for the purpose he could have driven us out of the bridge head. The urgent need was for infantry with which we could expand the bridgehead, get tanks across, and so continue the advance. I reported all of this to the C O who could do very little for me except request that the infantry brigade be pushed on forward as quickly as possible. This was about 1600 hrs. The tanks were fighting hard on the near bank and were unable to give me much support. The C O gave me permission to recross the river if necessary. However, as we had so far succeeded in bluffing the enemy as to our strength, I decided to hold on - but the decision was not an easy one.
15. At about 1700 hrs "A" Coy of the Westmr Regt under Major MAHONEY started to arrive, first one platoon and then the remainder of the company. The good luck which we had had unfortunately did not extend to them and they had several casualties including one man killed within two minutes after they reached the position. Major MAHONEY quickly organized an attack on the house to my left. This was captured, together with twenty prisoners, at the cost of some casualties. The SP 88 mm to my left was still doing damage and Tpr Funk volunteered to take it out with a PIAT covered by two Bren gunners of the Westmr Regt. He crept along the bank of the river until about 150 yards from the SP at which he fired one round. This exploded prematurely owing to overhanging foliage. Tpr Funk then crept forward to a spot from which he could get a better shot. At a range of about 100 yards his next shot was high and another low, but the final shot hit the suspension, following which the crew bailed out. One was shot with the Bren gun and the remainder were eventually captured. After this the two PANTHERS pulled back to a range of about 800 yards. Shortly after this a patrol which had been pushed out to the right flank reported that the enemy was massing on this flank, which hitherto had been quiet, in preparation for an attack.
16. Major MAHONEY asked me if I could push my tanks out on this flank so as to give him support. I asked if any tanks had been seen on the right and was told there was one and possibly more. I pointed out that the fire power of a cut-down Stuart against a PANTHER was inconsiderable and that to expose them to fire from the tanks would be virtual suicide; while if we kept them under cover we might succeed in bluffing the enemy as to our true strength, since we might persuade him that we had good AP weapons. It was extremely hard to deny this request for fire support. On the other hand, I felt there would be no advantage in attempting to do the impossible. A few minutes later one of the Westmr carriers which had come over with Major MAHONEY pushed out about 300 yards on his own initiative, apparently with the objective of securing the infantry's flank. Before he could see his danger, the enemy tanks swept in from the left front, cut him off and surrounded him. A few seconds later they moved back to their former positions with the carrier and any remaining members of its crew in the middle of them.

17. Shortly before dusk we were attacked from the front by three PANTHERS followed at some distance by about 100 infantry. The tanks came in from about 400 yards firing HE as they came. Most of this fire was high. The aeriels were clipped off two of my tanks, but fortunately there were no casualties. We fired everything we had from .5s to tommy-guns. We also fired PIATS, although the range was too long, with the object of persuading the enemy that we had A. Tk weapons. This seems to have succeeded, as the tanks swerved off at about 175 yards and did not press the attack. A few minutes later, the tanks again attacked and again we fired everything we had. I was climbing into my own tank to fire .5 when an HE hit a few feet away. It knocked down the remaining aerial and spattered the vicinity with fragments. One of them scratched me on the cheek, but did no serious damage, although I was somewhat dazed from the concussion for several minutes. Visibility was becoming very limited and PIAT ammunition was running low. Fortunately the tanks once again did not press their attack, and when they withdrew, they did not again attack, although they remained in the vicinity about 1000 yards away and were a source of no little concern to us.
18. About this time "C" Coy of the Westmrs got across on our right. This strengthened the position considerably although "B" Coy which were crossing quite a long way to our left were unable to get over until after dark. We began to dig in, which we did with considerable enthusiasm as the enemy started to put over large numbers of Nobelwerfer bombs. Fortunately, most of these were about 50 yards over, landing in the river bed where they did no damage. This fire kept up for most of the night and our slit trenches which started out about nine inches deep were a good four feet before morning.
19. Although I had spotted several good artillery targets, I had so far been unable to get artillery fire to bear on them. All of our FOO's had either had their vehicles destroyed or were out of range of their guns. About this time I made another try for arty support. I discovered that one of our scout cars was parked alongside a FOO tank. This tank had only one set which was on battery frequency, but by relaying messages through the scout car, I was able to talk to the FOO. The FOO turned out to belong to, of all things, a Jeep battery. But his guns were in action. The Jeep battery with its midget 75 guns had seemed rather comic when the operation was planned, but now the mighty mediums were silent and the Jeep guns did yeoman service. Throughout the night the FOO brought fire down on various targets which I indicated including the enemy tank harbour, areas in which movement was seen or heard and probable forming-up places. In all the FOO fired about 1000 rds. I do not know whether he did much damage. Still it must have worried the enemy some and the sound of our own guns was encouragement of the best kind.....
- 21 Toward morning the Nobelwerfer fire increased and from time to time there were bursts of Spadau fire. Several times the enemy went to the trouble of smoking our positions and each time we expected an immediate attack. Although the attack never materialized, it was a nerve-wracking business. The Jeep battery continued to fire concentrations at my requests and perhaps this played a part in discouraging the enemy - or perhaps he was only bluffing. At about 0500 hrs I talked to several of my men about where the Nebalwerfer fire was coming from and got a fairly good idea of the general area. In response to my request the Jeep guns shelled it and the Nebelwerfers were silent for nearly an hour. Later when they opened up again, the Jeep battery were too short of ammunition to repeat the process, but the adjutant whose tank, containing the rear link, was knocked out about half a mile from the river bank, saw an arty vehicle from 6th Armoured Div

proceeding along the road. He rushed out on the road and stopped it. It turned out to contain a FOO from their SP regiment. Fortunately, this officer's guns were in action and he was willing to take on any targets we could locate. I pointed out quite a number, using map references and corrections by the cardinal point system. Unfortunately, we did not again succeed in silencing the Nebelwerfers and they continued to make things uncomfortable during most of the morning.

22. The house to my left which the Westar Regt has captured the previous evening had to be abandoned during the night as our numbers were too small to hold it. The enemy had re-occupied it and was becoming very troublesome. At first light the Westar Regt attacked and captured it suffering some casualties in the process.
23. An attack had been scheduled for first light by the Irish Regiment of Canada which was assembled on the near bank ready to cross. This was postponed until 0900 hrs and later until 1130 hrs due to the difficulty of teeing up supporting fire. At about 0800 hrs the CO ordered me to return to the rear bank. The situation was still not too secure and the heavy weapons of the recon troop made it of greater value than its numbers would indicate. I therefore requested permission to remain until the infantry attack was completed. This was granted. As the infantry attack went in we fired our remaining ammunition to support it and at about 1215 hrs we returned to the near bank after an extremely eventful 24 hrs.

3. INSTRUCTION ON TRAFFIC CONTROL ISSUED BY
D.A. & G.M.G., 1 CDN CORPS, 1 JUN 44

A.M.C.

1. Since 1 Cdn Corps broke through the Hitler Line, one of the greatest problems facing all concerned has been the movement of fms and the traffic control required to see that this movement proceeded with the least possible hindrance. After the experiences of the past week or ten days, it has become obvious that a specially organized Traffic Control Office, headed up by a first grade Staff Offr, is necessary at Main Corps. This office therefore will be set immediately with yourself in control. This will be your sole job until the traffic situation eases.
2. The att diagram shows the organization. As you can see it is divided into movements and traffic control. As far as the latter is concerned, one Squadron of the 1 Cdn Armd C Regt, with all its resources in wireless sets, will remain available to the APM to assist in the traffic system and the CO of the Squadron will take his orders from the APM at Corps.
3. The responsibilities of the Traffic Control Office will be as follows:
 - (a) As stated above, to issue orders for veh movement and to exercise traffic control.

To decide the road lay-out, in co-operation with the GS and CE, i.e. the number of up roads and the number of "down" roads required on the Corps front. As in an advance, the majority of movement is fwd two "up" and one "down" should suffice for a Corps of two Divs.

- (c) To keep a diagrammatic record of road movement and the locn of units moving on roads, so that G (Ops) or Q (Ops) will know at all times where any particular unit is on the road.
- (b) To ensure that fms and units do not place vehs on a Corps road at a greater speed or density than they can be taken off at their destination. In other words, that adequate recce is carried out ahead, before units and fms move.

Traffic Control

4. . As I see it, we can compare the roads we have had to date as a railway system and not by any means a first class system. We have attempted to feed the absolute maximum number of vehs on to our system. The system has been subjected to break-downs, i.e. roads have given way at various points and from time to time bridges have been lowered in their classification, rolling stock has broken down and blocked the line, etc, etc. With these factors in mind, it is most important that our traffic system should be very closely controlled and this must be done by the Pro Coys and by the personnel of the Sqn of the Armd C Regt who are being used to man TPs and to "trouble-shoot".
5. The personnel mentioned in the above para must have a thorough understanding of the traffic plan, i.e. the direction in which traffic must be made to flow. I feel that over the last week this has not really been the case. I admit that orders have been issued hurriedly, this being necessitated by operations. But I also feel that the orders issued have not, in many cases, got down to the lowest level, i.e. the points men on duty in a number of cases have had no idea as to what the traffic plan really was. It is absolutely essential that the junior ofrs in the Sqn of the Armd C Regt and the ofrs in the Pro Coy, and the senior NCOs in both units should understand the plan which the Staff have issued. It is then up to them to see that this plan works. While I admit that a subordinate has to use his own initiative to cope with a sudden situation, it is obviously quite impossible for these subordinates to suddenly decide that they are going to route traffic in a different direction than the one laid down. As I said before, the line is heavily loaded and to suddenly switch traffic in another direction can only result in chaotic conditions. On a railway system if it is impossible for traffic to get through, it is put on a siding, and the same thing must be done with our traffic. It must be put on to sidings if it cannot flow in the direction ordered, and this action must be reported, through the nearest TP, to Control TP for a decision as to its onward direction.
6. I think we must get a greater number of our Provost Coy and a good many of the Sqn of the Armd C Regt on to motorcycles so that they can do roving patrols. (The Comd has stated that G(SD) must give the highest priority to release of motorcycles to all Pro Coys and to the Sqn of the Armd C Regt. At present too many jeeps are being used which are not really suitable for patrol work as many times it is impossible to get along a column in a jeep.)
7. Generally speaking, traffic discipline among fms and units is poor. Dvrs think only of themselves and there are continual cases occurring of bad blocks simply because dvrs break out of the line and eventually find that they are brought to a halt facing an on-coming veh and cannot get back into their own traffic lane. These roving patrols therefore are most essential and can do a lot to prevent this type of thing by pulling traffic offenders off the road into the nearest dispersal area and holding them there

until they can be fed into the stream of traffic again. Other bad faults are halting on the crown of the road, halting nose to tail, and not getting broken-down vehs off the road.

8. Sign-posting must be greatly improved. At present it is not good. I suggest therefore that the Pro Coys must be allotted extra 3-ton lorries, if necessary, and that these lorries must be literally filled with spare signs of all types. I feel that we can do a great deal to educate our dvrs in proper traffic discipline with an adequate system of instructive signs. Furthermore "up" and "down" routes, and "No Entry" signs are most important. Linked with this is the fact that all pointsmen must clearly understand what an "up" route is and what a "down" route is.
9. Dispersal area or sidings on the right hand side of the road in the vicinity of all TPs and other areas where trouble is likely to occur are essential and must be used.
10. As far as TPs are concerned these must be adequately manned. Posts must not go off the air for various reasons and therefore spare operators and plenty of batteries are required.
11. DDME must make quite sure that rec vehs are at all TPs and all concerned must ensure that recovery does not take place during wrong periods of the day as I saw it happening yesterday.
12. Advance road intelligence must continually come in through Engineer channels and be passed to the Traffic Control Office. If necessary the C can obtain, as a temporary measure, additional Engineer offrs from available rfts.
13. The Traffic Control Office at Main Corps must be located near Control TP. I do not want you to skimp on your organization and therefore suggest that you must have a lorry and a lorried marquer. Let me know what additional offrs and clerical staff you require.
14. The CSO has been instructed that he will probably have to lay line from the Traffic Control Office to one or more of the more important TPs on the Main Corps axis. This of course will supplement the normal wireless comms.
15. It is of the utmost urgency that the above plan is put into effect rapidly.

