**Lone Tree Hill**

A group of soldiers walking in the woods

Description automatically generated with low confidence

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**Stand list:**

**Stand 1: The road to Maffin Bay**

**Stand 2: The 158th attacks**

**Stand 3: The Japanese counterattack and U.S. repositioning of troops**

**Stand 4: 20th BDE/6 ID attacks**

**Stand 5: Aftermath**

**Integration**

**Stand 1: The road to Maffin Bay**

**Directions:**

N/A – For all stands refer to VSR operators instructions for screen captures/locations.

**Visuals:**

1-1: Operational Overview

1-2: Campaign Overview

**Orientation:**

N/A – Have Operator Instructor Slide 1 up on terrain computer

**Description**

Visual 1-1: Operational Overview

1. Allied operations in the Pacific were split across two approaches, the Central Pacific Operation under ADM Nimitz, through the Gilbert/Marshall/Mariana Islands, and the Southern Pacific Operation under GEN MacArthur through New Guinea and the Philippines.

Visual 1-2: 1-2: Campaign Overview

1. As the Southern Pacific Operation advanced across the Pacific Ocean with the ultimate goal of retaking the Philippines, the challenge of establishing the lengthy Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCc) over such extended distances became apparent.
   1. U.S. forces needed to secure areas that could serve as staging areas for follow on operation.
   2. Additionally, U.S. forces needed to seize Japanese airstrips that could threaten the SLOCs and staging bases.
2. General MacArthur determined that the next step after seizing Hollandia/Aitape would be securing islands in Geelvink Bay (including Biak and Noemfoor).
   1. With 325 miles between Hollandia and Biak, the Japanese presence in the Wadke-Sarmi area between Hollandia & Biak threatened operations in both areas.
   2. Because of the Japanese airfields located in the Wadke-Sarmi area, Allied Air Forces determined that seizure of the area was a prerequisite for advancing towards the Philippines.
   3. Also in March 1944, when the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed General MacArthur to provide air support for Central Pacific Area operations, airfields in the Wadke-Sarmi & Biak areas could provide the support. Furthermore, operations in those areas could divert attention from the Central Pacific Area.
   4. Operations in the Wadke-Sarmi area were under the control of ALAMO Task Force, based around the 6th Army. Under ALAMO Task Force, 163rd RCT/41st Division was designated TORNADO Task Force and tasked with seizing Wadke Island.
3. **Instructor’s Note: Japanese units are designated by italics.** U.S. estimated 6,500 Japanese troops in this region, predominately from the *36th Division 222d, 223d*, and *224th* infantry. Intelligence also estimated there were an additional 14,000 Japanese troops close enough to easily reinforce the region.
4. While Wadke Island was the main objective, the island was within range of Japanese shore-based artillery. As a result, the nearby mainland at Arare had to be seized to protect operations on Wadke.
   1. The initial mainland landing site was Arare.
   2. Maffin airfield, near Maffin Bay, was targeted during the preliminary bombardment to prevent Japanese from using it to interfere with the Wadke landing. The airfield is ~10 miles from the island.
5. TORNADO Task Force secured Wakde Island & Arare on 20 May after three days of hard fighting. The Japanese lost 759 killed and four captured, the U.S. suffered 40 KIA and 107 WIA.
6. Due to Allied interdiction of SLOCs, Japanese High Command wrote off forces in the Wakde-Sarmi area as lost and directed them to hold in place as long as they could on their own.

**Analysis:**

None

**Stand 2: The 158th attacks**

**Directions:**

Begin with Operator Instruction #1 (Full terrain overview box) and move to next location as directed.

**Visuals:**

2-1: Lone Tree Hill Terrain Overview

2-2: ALAMO FORCE

2-3: Japanese Forces

2-4: 158th Initial Advance

2-5: 158th fight near Maffin 1

2-6: 158th near the Snaky River

**Orientation:**

Visual 2-1: Lone Tree Hill Terrain Overview

1. Point out Wadke Island in relation to the Tor River, Maffin Bay, and Lone Tree Hill

Have the terrain operator zoom in on the terrain to mirror Operator Instruction #2, focus area of terrain box / default view.

1. The area west of Arare contained a number of prominent terrain features would become important to future operations:
   1. The area overall was heavily jungled, with minimal elevation change and only a few tiny villages, and only one jungle road.
   2. There were four rivers, from East to West:
      1. Unnamed River
      2. Tor River
      3. Tirfoam River
      4. Snakey River
   3. Maffin Bay provided usable beaches for logistical support for future operations
   4. West of Maffin Bay was a prominence that became known as ‘Lone Tree Hill’ since a map in the TORNADO Task Force HQ showing the prominence had a single tree drawn on it. **Instructor’s Note:** Operator instructions 3 & 4 are not replicated as views – they are included to help orient to the ground and find the Japanese Observation Post in the jungle on Lone Tree Hill.
      1. The hill's coral mass was covered with dense rain forest and jungle undergrowth. Lone Tree Hill was about 175 feet high, 1,200 yards long north to south, and 1,100 yards wide east to west. At the top of Lone Tree Hill was a stretch of rough but generally level ground lying mostly along the western part of the hill. While not very tall in an absolute sense, Lone Tree Hill was significantly higher than the surrounding ground. A Japanese observation post on top of the Hill could see the entirety of Maffin Bay, and Wadke Island approximately nine miles away. Direct the terrain operation to replice the view in Operator Instruction #5, View from Lone Tree Hill OP, point out Maffin Bay and Wadke Island, then return to Default View.
      2. There were many coral outcroppings, potholes, and small crevices. The north side of Lone Tree Hill was somewhat easier to ascend than the rest of the hill.
      3. West of Lone Tree Hill was a narrow beach. Between the beach and the western face of Lone Tree Hill was a heavily forested swampy area.
   5. South of Lone Tree Hill, across the road, was Mt. Saksin, a terrain feature about 100 feet higher than Lone Tree Hill. Mt. Saksin was the name given to an indefinitely outlined hill mass which forms the northern extremity of the Irier Mountains, extending inland from the coast at Lone Tree Hill.
      1. The more westerly of these noses was named "Hill 225" after its height in feet. No name was given to the eastern ridge line, which pointed toward Lone Tree Hill from the southeast.
      2. The name Saksin was specifically applied to a prominent peak about 2,000 yards due south of Lone Tree.

**Description:**

Visual: 2-2: ALAMO FORCE

1. Under the command of BG Doe (41st DIV Asst. Division Commander/163rd CDR) TORNADO TASK FORCE was based around the 163rd Regiment of the 41st Division, along with 27th Engineers and a platoon of tanks from the 603rd company. Task force artillery consisted of the 167th & 218th battalions and the 163rd cannon company, all organized under the 191st Headquarters. The 158th RCT (non-divisional) would join the task force following the seizure of Wadke. **Instructor’s Note:** the reason BG Doe is dual hatted at this point is that he had relieved the previous 163rd commander on 9 May.
   1. The 158th RCT, the Bushmasters, were not a divisional regiment. It was a Arizona Nation Guard. After taking part in the Louisian Maneuvers, the regiment was detatched from the 45th Division and sent to the Panama Canal zone in January 42.
   2. It was permanently separated from the 45th in February 42, and remained separate through the remainder of the war.
   3. The Bushmasters remained in Panama conducting jungle training and testing spcialized jungle equipment, tactics, weapons and rations.
      * 1. In January 1943 the regiment was transferred to Australia. In March 43 the regiment began hoping through the South Pacific.
        2. The 1st Battalion would see it’s first combat in operations against Lone Tree Hill. The 2d and 3d Battalions had been in combat on New Britain against lesser opposition and in different terrain, and both had undergone some reorganization and had received many untried replacements since.

Visual 2-3: Japanese Forces

1. Japanese forces were predominately from the *223d* and *224th Infantry Regiments* of the *36th Division*. The entire force in the Sarmi area was designated the *Yuki (Snow) Group*. The *Yuki Group* was commanded by *Lt. Gen. Hachiro Tagami*, commander of the *36th Division*.
   1. The *Yuki Group* was divided in to three forces, each assigned to a defense sector
      1. *Right Sector Force* –
         1. Covered Wakde Island and the coast from Tementoe Creek to Woske River (13 miles).
         2. Mainland forces were 300 troops of *3/224*, *16th Fields Airdrome Construction Unit*, and a five-gun battery of 75mm mountain artillery.
         3. The force totaled ~1,200 troops and was commanded by *Lt. Col. Kato*.

Build visual

* + - 1. The combined *Right Sector Force-Yuki Group* troops were well led, taking every advantage of heavily forested terrain for cover and concealment, yet retaining their mobility. The Japanese were tried and trained troops, having had considerable experience in China and having been in the Sarmi area for over six months.

Remove build

* + 1. *Central Sector Force*
       1. Covered from the Woske River to Sawar Creek (4.5 miles) including Sawar Drome.
       2. The main combat force was the *223d Infantry*, minus *2d Battalion* and one company of *1st Battalion.* Additionally, there was a three-gun battery of 75mm mountain artillery, the *103d Field Airdrome Construction Unit*, some antiaircraft units and a platoon of light tanks.
       3. The *Central Sector Force* totaled ~2,500 troops and was commander *Col. Naoyasu Yoshino*.
    2. The *Left Sector Force*
       1. Covered from Sawar Creek to Tevar Creek (6.5 miles).
       2. Major forces were *2/223* minus two companies but with a company from *1/223* attached, a battalion of 75mm mountain artillery, and antiaircraft & engineer units all under the command of *Maj. Gen. Shigeru Yamada*, commander of the *4th Engineer Group*.
       3. This force totaled ~2,500 troops as well.
    3. Also in the area, separate from the *Yuki Group*, was the *Matsuyama Force* – *2/224* & *3/224* plus a battalion of mountain artillery, commanded by *Col. Soemon Matsuyama*.
  1. On 19 May *Lt. Gen. Tagami* was ordered to attack and planned a pincer movement.
     1. He ordered the *Matsuyama Force* concentrate at Masi-masi and then attack allied positions at Toem from the east.
     2. He reorganized the *Central Sector Force* and placed the combat elements under *Col. Yoshino* (the *Yoshino Force*) with orders cross the Tor/Foein and attack Toem from the south and southwest.
     3. The attack was set for the night of 25/6 May.
  2. Additionally, the *Right Sector Force* established positions on the west side of the Tor River to stop Allied troops from advancing on the Maffin and Sawar airfields.

Visual 2-4: 158th Initial Advance

1. On 19 May 3/163 patrolled west to the Tor River and established a platoon sized foothold on the west bank, expanding to a three-platoon sized element on the 20th.
2. Also on the 20th, the Allies received intelligence that the Japanese were planning a major attack on the Toem-Arare beachhead.
3. On 21 May the 158th RCT arrived and bivouacked near Arare.
4. Following the seizure of Wadke Island, Toem and Arare, the TF TORNADO mission expanded to include offensive operations to disrupt Japanese attack plans and seize the initiative by attacking toward Sarmi, 16 miles west of the Tor River.
   1. The 158th Infantry was selected to lead the attack.
   2. The 158th began relieving 3/163 forces on the Tor River.
5. On 22 May the 158th completed their relief of 3/163, establish a roadblock at Maffin #1, and consolidated 3/158 at Maffin #1. At daylight on the 23rd 3/158 would attack towards Sarmi, and the remainder of the regiment would cross the Tor on the 24th/25th.
6. On the 23d the advance of Company L met increasingly strong resistance.

Have the terrain operator drop down on the costal road at the point identified on Operator Instructions 7&8 and proceed west down the road to the rock pictured on #9 and pause. Note: rocks on the roadside are used as ‘Easter Eggs’ to denote stopping points. Red trees also serve as ‘Easter Eggs’ to mark key points.

* 1. Japanese defenses were centered about 1,800 yards west of the Tor.
  2. The rest of the 3d BN crossed the Tor before 1130, and quickly moved forward to assist Company L who were pinned down along the main coastal track west of the lakes.
  3. Company K pushed up to the left flank of Company L, while Company I moved toward L's rear. Supported by the 81-mm mortars from Company M, Companies K and L were able to push gradually forward during the afternoon, advancing on a front about 400 yards wide.
  4. Since the attack was not progressing as rapidly as expected, Colonel Herndon ordered 1st Battalion across the Tor earlier than planned.
     1. 1st Battalion did not start moving until 1400 and could not get far enough forward to join the attack before dark.
     2. Tank support from 1st Platoon 603d Tank Company did not complete crossing the Tor until the infantry had halted for the night.
  5. With the Japanese tendency to attack at night well understood, Companies L and K dug in for the night across the main coastal track at a point about 400 yards east of Maffin No. 1.
     1. The road swung away from the beach, and Company L extended the perimeter about 500 yards north to the shore of Maffin Bay with Company I in position along the road east of Companies L and K.
     2. 1st Battalion bivouacked for the night on the west bank of the Tor at the river's mouth.
     3. 3d Battalion lost 8 men killed, 12 wounded, and 1 missing during the day, while 6 Japanese were killed and 1 captured. The battalion planned to continue the attack the next day.

Visual 2-5: 158th fight near Maffin 1

1. Shortly after 0700 on the 24th, Company M’s 81-mm. mortars laid down a brief concentration in front of Companies K and L, and at 0715 the 147th and 218th Field Artillery Battalions began a fifteen-minute support bombardment.
   1. When a few artillery shells fell on Company L, the 3d Battalion commander thought that his own artillery was falling short, and he had the fire stopped quickly. It turned out to actually be Japanese artillery fire. **Instructor’s Note:** how they determined it was Japanese artillery fire is unclear.
   2. Companies K and L moved out as planned at 0730. On the right Company L advanced closer the beach and encountered only scattered rifle fire. Company K had barely begun their attack along the main road when Japanese machine gun and rifle fire from concealed positions in a wooded area on the left front halted its advance.
   3. Unable to gain ground, Company K called for tank support. Two tanks, together with a flame-thrower detachment from Company B of the 27th Engineers, arrived at Company K's lines about 1000.
   4. With the flame throwers and tanks clearing the way the infantry overran the Japanese defenses, killing ten of the enemy and capturing two machine guns.
   5. The remainder of the Japanese force, an estimated 30 troops, disappeared into the jungle south of the road and continued to harass Company K with rifle fire.
   6. Company L reached the outskirts of Maffin No. 1 about 1400. They encountered little resistance, but the battalion commander did not want a gap to develop between K&L companies. Have the terrain operator turn off the road at the point identified in Operator Instructions #9. #10 shows how the paths through the jungle are marked. Follow the path as depicted in #11, to the point L Company comes back to the road as shown in #12 to the first tank as depicted in #13.
      1. As L Company scouted for a crossing site on the Tirfoam River west of Maffin No. 1 they came under intense machinegun fire from Japanese positions on the west bank.
      2. The company maneuvered southwest away from the beach toward the main road and up the Tirfoam, but continued to receive machinegun fire from Japanese positions on both sides of the river.
   7. The company commander called for tank support, and 1st Platoon, 603d Tank Company sent four medium tanks forward. Direct the terrain operator to move from Operator instruction 13 to 14. As the tanks moved into position elements of the *Right Sector Force* consisting of *3d Battalion, 224th Infantry*, along with a company of the *223d Infantry*, charged out of the jungle.
      1. The Japanese were under *Colonel Kato*, *Right Sector Force* commander, who was killed as he personally led a small detachment against the American tanks.
      2. The enemy was quickly thrown back with heavy losses by the combined fire of the four tanks and Company L's riflemen and machine gunners.
      3. Under cover of their infantry attack the Japanese dragged a 37-mm. antitank gun forward out of the jungle. Direct the terrain operator to move forward from the tank to see the far side of the river. To the left/south of the road is a Japanese AT gun, move forward to replicate the view shown in #15. As the enemy infantrymen withdrew to the southwest after the death of *Colonel Kato*, the antitank gun opened fire. It was soon destroyed, and its crew killed, but not before three of American tanks were damaged to the point they were forced to withdraw for repairs.
   8. The separate actions of Companies L and K during the morning had created a gap between those two units, and the battalion commander sent Company I forward to fill the void. Company K remained pinned down by Japanese fire from their left flank while the reinforcing company moved west along the road to Company K's right rear. With the attack stalled, shortly after 1200 Colonel Herndon ordered the 1st Battalion forward.
   9. The 1st was to bypass opposition on Company K's left by a deep envelopment to the south across the Tirfoam. Once beyond the river the battalion was to push northwest to a jetty which projected into Maffin Bay about 600 yards west of the Tirfoam's mouth.
      1. Company A started the flanking maneuver about 1330 but was soon halted by machine gun and rifle fire from dense jungle south of the main road. Company C was ordered to reinforce Company A.
      2. By the time Company C got into position to continue the attack, darkness was approaching, and the battalion commander stopped the flanking maneuver for the night.
      3. With Company A securing their left flank, Company K extended its right front to Maffin No. 1 establishing contact with Companies L and I.
      4. Company L had sent patrols across the Tirfoam late in the afternoon, but they were withdrawn before dark, and the company began setting up night defenses about 200 yards east of the river.
   10. For the night Company L's right flank rested on the beach, and the unit's left was tied into Company I's perimeter farther inland.
       1. To the left rear of Company I was Company K, with its lines stretching across the coastal track.
       2. Companies A and C were south of the road on K's left.
       3. Company B had moved forward late in the day to reinforce the 3d Battalion's three rifle companies and was apparently located for the night near Companies I and L.
   11. Casualties during the day had been heavy—28 men were killed and 75 wounded. The I Company Commander and many others succumbed to heat exhaustion and had to be evacuated. The officer strength of Company I was reduced to two.
   12. Japanese casualties were undoubtedly higher, especially considering the *Right Sector Force's* suicidal attacks against the four American tanks. *Colonel Kato's* place as *Right Sector Force* commander was taken by *Maj. Yasake Matsuoka*, formerly a battalion commander of the *233d Infantry*, who was ordered to continue to defend the approaches to Maffin Strip.
2. The sacrifices of the *Right Sector Force* had not been in vain.
   1. Under cover of the unit's holding action the *Yoshino Force* continued its wide envelopment south of the 158th Infantry toward Toem and Arare, a maneuver of which the TORNADO Task Force was unaware of.
   2. At the same time the delaying action of the *Right Sector Force* gave the *Yuki Group* ample time to move into the hills south and east of Maffin Strip.
   3. The 158th Infantry, ordered to continue the advance on the 25th, was soon to engage the *Yuki Group* and the remnants of the *Right Sector Force*, which had withdrawn south into the jungle and west into hills beyond the Tirfoam.
3. Action on the 25th started with the withdrawal of the 158th Infantry's forward units to a point 350 yards east of the Tirfoam, while artillery and mortar concentrations were laid on the banks of the river and on suspected enemy defenses west of the stream.

Have the terrain operator move on to the bridge as shown in Operator instruction 16, and move west down the road to the view shown in #17 while the historian discusses points a.-h. Have the terrain operator stop at the view in #17.

* 1. Under cover of these fires the 1st Battalion relieved the 3d, and Company E was sent forward to reinforce the left of the 1st Battalion. The 3d Battalion reverted to regimental reserve.
  2. Patrols of the 1st Battalion moved out about 0830, and the main body followed fifteen minutes later. The artillery and mortar fire had been effective.
  3. Japanese defenses east of the Tirfoam were found destroyed or abandoned. With only scattered rifle fire opposing its movement, the 1st Battalion reached its initial objective, a bridge which crossed the Tirfoam about 200 yards inland, at 0915.
  4. Patrols moved north and south along the east bank, dispersing enemy stragglers and securing Maffin No. 1. At 0930 Colonel Herndon decided to send the battalion across the river.
  5. The next objective was the jetty 600 yards to the west. To prepare for crossing the Tirfoam, the 1st Battalion's machine guns and 60-mm. mortars fired on a heavily wooded area just west of the bridge.
  6. Patrols crossed the river shortly after 0930 and reported only sporadic rifle fire. Companies B and C crossed the bridge without incident about 1115, followed by E Company who deployed on 1st Battalion’s left flank. Company B had reached the jetty by noon.
     1. 1st Battalion paused to reorganize while the 2d Battalion crossed the Tirfoam and by 1300 both battalions were ready to push forward.
     2. Colonel Herndon set the next objective as Lone Tree Hill, a terrain feature which rose from the flat coastal plain about 2,000 yards west of the jetty.
  7. O/A 23 May *General Tagami* moved his headquarters into the Mt. Saksin area on the southwest side of the central peak.
     1. As the 158th Infantry pushed forward on the 24th, elements of the *Yuki Group* and *Right Sector Force* moved onto Hill 225 and Lone Tree Hill.
     2. The Japanese began constructing hasty defensive positions on Hill 225 and Lone Tree Hill. Tied into the natural terrain barriers in the area they effectively defended the land approaches to Maffin Strip, which lay less than 1,000 yards west of Lone Tree Hill.
  8. While there was some discussion of bypassing Lone Tree Hill, TF TORNADO did not currently have the landing craft to execute a maritime approach, and the staff did not believe the land approaches to Maffin Strip were strongly defended. Based on reports from his patrols Colonel Herndon also did not believe that a large Japanese force occupied Hill 225 or Mt. Saksin's eastern nose.

The terrain operator needs to stop at #17.

1. About 1500 on 25 May, Companies B and C had reached a point on the main road a few yards below the southernmost bend of the Snaky River.
   1. There enemy machine gun fire from the native village at the eastern entrance to the defile between Lone Tree Hill and the two noses of Mt. Saksin halted the advance.
   2. As the forward troops deployed to find cover from Japanese machine gun fire they began receiving artillery fire. Again, the U.S. troops mistakenly concluded this was friendly artillery fire.
   3. BG Patrick, who had assumed command of TF TORNADO from BG Doe that morning, was notified of the opposition encountered by 1st Battalion. **Instructor’s Note:** BG Doe resumed his role as 41st DIV ADC to prepare for Biak.
   4. He ordered the advance stopped for the night and instructed the 158th Infantry to remain east of the Snaky River so U.S. artillery could register on the native village and the defile without endangering the forward troops.
   5. Harassed by a few artillery shells, which they now recognized as coming from Japanese 70-mm. or 75-mm. artillery, 1st Battalion pulled back about 500 yards east of the Snaky.
      1. 1st Battalion set up with their left flank on the road and the right on the beach.
      2. 2d Battalion established a series of company perimeters back along the road to the east.
      3. Casualties for the day had been 22 killed and 26 wounded, mostly from 1st Battalion, while about 50 Japanese had been killed.

Visual 2-6: 158th near the Snaky River

1. Plans for the 26th included a renewed attack on Lone Tree Hill, with the east bank of the Woske River (2,000m west of Lone Tree hill) set as the final objective. The native village at the eastern entrance to the defile would serve as an intermediate objective.
   1. The plan called for naval shelling of the northern slopes of Lone Tree Hill from 0630 to 0700 followed by a fifteen-minute artillery preparation with the infantry attacking at 0845.
      1. The naval fire started ten minutes late. Two destroyers lying offshore shelled the northern slopes of Lone Tree Hill and the Maffin Bay area, firing on known or suspected enemy defensive positions and assembly points.
      2. After a twenty-minute bombardment the two support vessels withdrew, but the artillery fire did not begin until 0830. The time lag gave the Japanese time to prepare for the infantry attack indicated by the destroyer fire.
      3. The artillery fired on the defile and against the eastern slopes of Lone Tree Hill and ceased firing about 0845.
   2. A few moments later B/1/158 started moving westward. The infantry's line of departure was nearly 1,000 yards east of the village at the southeast foot of Lone Tree Hill, but the advance was slow because the road ran through heavily jungled terrain. This gave the Japanese time to reoccupy positions in the defile and on Lone Tree Hill minimizing the impact of the naval and artillery bombardment.
   3. Company B moved forward to the point where it was stopped the previous afternoon and again, they were stopped - this time by fire from the southeastern corner of Lone Tree Hill.
      1. Company D's heavy machine guns were brought up to spray a densely wooded area in front of the point rifle platoon, dispersing the Japanese riflemen and allowing Company B to move forward again.
      2. Less than 100 yards of ground had been gained when the company again encountered machine gun and mortar fire originating in the native village.
   4. Company A, initially off the road to the right rear of Company B, turned north to the mouth of the Snaky River. One platoon crossed at the river mouth at 1030 but was quickly forced back to the east bank by Japanese machine gun fire.
      1. Artillery support was called for and successfully in stopped the enemy fire, and about 1350 all Company A crossed the Snaky.
      2. Company A was ordered to move down the west side of that stream to establish contact with Company B and to send one platoon up the eastern slope of Lone Tree Hill to probe enemy positions.
   5. Other efforts were being made to scatter the Japanese opposing Company B.
      1. Company E (minus a platoon patrolling on Mt. Saksin) moved up to the left flank of Company B on the south side of the main road.
      2. The combined efforts of the two rifle companies proved insufficient to dislodge the Japanese from their positions at the eastern entrance to the defile, and the enemy fire forced the American units to seek cover.
      3. Company F was ordered to pass through B's left flank and maneuver to Hill 225 to attack the Japanese positions from the rear. Company F's attack could not start before dark and Company A, moving up the west side of the Snaky, was unable to relieve the pressure on Company B.
      4. Finally, Company A was forced to withdraw east of the river for a second time because of enemy fire from Lone Tree Hill.
      5. The bridge over the Tirfoam and the road west of the stream could not support tanks, preventing armored reinforcements for Company B.
   6. Casualties on the 26th had been lighter—only 6 killed and 10 wounded—while an estimated 35 Japanese had been killed.
      1. Expecting Japanese patrols during the night, the forward elements established a semicircular perimeter.
      2. Company B anchored its right flank near the eastern edge of the native village and extended its lines about 100 yards southwest across the road.
      3. Company E refused the south flank by stretching the line southeast from B's left, 500 yards up the slope of Mt. Saksin's eastern nose.
      4. Company A tied its left into B's right and extended the defense northeast about 300 yards from the road to a large bend in the Snaky River.
      5. The remainder of the 1st and 2d Battalions was strung out along both sides of the main road to the rear of the three forward companies.
      6. Operations during the day had secured less than 1,000 yards of ground in a westerly direction and about the same distance inland from the beach.
   7. The 158th Infantry had located and probed some of the principal Japanese defenses in the area, which indicated the Japanese guarding the land approaches to Maffin Strip were in greater strength than had been expected.
      1. Company B had discovered the Japanese were firmly dug in along both sides of the defile.
      2. A platoon of Company A found Lone Tree Hill was honeycombed with enemy defensive positions, especially on its northern and northeastern faces.
      3. The regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon and a platoon of Company E patrolled in the vicinity of Mt. Saksin and Hill 225.
      4. The Company E platoon found many deserted Japanese positions along the eastern slopes of Mt. Saksin and on that hill's eastern nose, but the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon had a less optimistic report.
      5. Probing into rugged, heavily forested terrain between the east nose and Hill 225, the platoon had been ambushed. Extricating itself with difficulty, it reported that the Japanese were dug in in great strength all over Hill 225.
   8. In spite of the recent combat, the Task Force headquarters clung to the intial assessment that there were limited Japanese forces in the area, and plans for the 27th were based on this erroneous idea.
      1. 1st Battalion was to push on through the defile and at the same time secure Lone Tree Hill.
      2. 2d Battalion was to clear Hill 225.
      3. Prior to the 26th, field artillery had been supporting the 158th Infantry from positions 8,000 to 10,000 yards to the east. Once the infantry cleared the western end of the defile, it would move into an area beyond the most effective range of artillery support.
      4. The 147th Field Artillery Battalion's 105-mm. howitzers were displaced forward to Maffin No. 1 to support the advance of the 158th Infantry on the 27th.
      5. At 0700 hours on 27 May two destroyers fired on Lone Tree Hill and the Maffin Strip area, starting the fire support for the attack. Artillery and infantry action on this morning was better coordinated than on the previous day. The destroyer fire lasted until 0745, then the field artillery and 81-mm. mortars of the 158th Infantry laid concentrations on known and suspected enemy positions in the defile, on Lone Tree Hill, and on Hill 225.
      6. At 0830 Company F, moving around Company E on the south flank, started its attack. Behind close artillery support, mostly controlled by artillery liaison planes, Company F pushed up a terrain feature they believed to be Hill 225. It was not discovered until late the next day that F Company was actually on the eastern nose of Mt. Saksin and about 700 yards east of its reported location.
      7. Company B, still at the eastern entrance to the defile, was again unable to make any progress and during the morning was held up by machine gun and mortar fire from concealed enemy positions on the southern and southwestern slopes of Lone Tree Hill.
      8. Indirect fire had trouble reaching into the draws or caves in which many of the Japanese weapons were emplaced.
      9. Small parties of Japanese also conducted a series of localized counterattacks.
      10. The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 158th Infantry had now been engaged in heavy combat for three days against an enemy force which was aggressive and clever on the defense. By evening on 27 May, the 158th Infantry had lost almost 300 men killed, wounded, or evacuated as nonbattle casualties—the latter principally as a result of heat exhaustion.
          1. American artillery support had not been all that could be desired. Maps were so inaccurate that the artillery had difficulty finding designated targets, and it was impossible, even with the aid of spotting aircraft and forward observers, to lay fire into the enemy's defile positions without endangering the forward troops.
          2. Tank support unavailable, and Colonel Herndon had come to consider tank support so vital that he secured permission to have two tanks brought forward to the beach at the mouth of the Snaky River.
          3. The tanks were to be transported by LCM's (all of which were badly needed at the Arare-Toem beachhead and at Wakde Island for lightering purposes) to the mouth of the Snaky on the morning of the 28th and were to move south along the stream to aid the units trying to break through the defile.

**Analysis:**

1. What are the challenges of integrating combined arms forces in a jungle environment? Impact on personnel and equipment, reduced mobility, limited line of sight, enemy fighting from fortified positions, higher potential for fratricide, offensive versus defensive engagements, communication and logistics challenges, interaction with the local population, limited mobility on trails or footpaths, CASEVAC challenges, conditioning / acclimation period, force protection, and Indigenous animals and insects.
2. How do you employ tanks in a jungle environment?
   1. Restrictive terrain and the lack of LOCs can limit armored forces’ mobility in the jungle.
   2. Armored forces primarily provide support by fire for infantry in jungle operations.
   3. Armored forces are best suited to the following tactical tasks in the jungle.
      1. Support by fire.
      2. A tactical mission task in which a maneuver force moves to a position where it can engage the enemy by direct fire to support of another maneuvering force.
      3. Retain key terrain.
      4. A tactical mission task in which the commander ensures that a terrain feature controlled by a friendly force remains free of enemy occupation or use.
      5. Destroy or defeat enemy armor.
      6. Reduce encircled or isolated enemy forces.
      7. A tactical mission task that involves the destruction of an encircled or bypassed enemy force.
      8. Secure critical facilities or infrastructure.
      9. A tactical mission task that involves preventing a unit, facility, or geographical location from being damaged or destroyed as a result of enemy action.
      10. Suppress.
      11. A tactical mission task that results in the temporary degradation of the performance of a force or weapon system below the level needed to accomplish its mission.
   4. Use of armor in the jungle is restricted by:
      1. Vegetation.
      2. Densely forested areas, where tree trunks grow close and heavy above-ground root systems exist, limit armored forces’ mobility. Thick stands of bamboo may slow or even stop tanks.
      3. Topography.
      4. Many jungles exist in rugged mountainous areas that impede armored forces’ mobility. Swamps, coastal river basins, and other areas with high water tables and multiple water ways pose obstacles to tanks because of their soft soil and frequent deep channels.
      5. Weather.
      6. Heavy rain and monsoons cause rivers and streams to rise and become unfordable. They also saturate the soil and damage roads, leaving both improved and unimproved LOCs impassable for armor.
   5. Although limited, tanks are not precluded from jungle operations, and restrictions can be mitigated by adhering to the following principles:
      1. Know the terrain.
      2. Know where tanks can travel and avoid areas obviously impassable.
      3. Know the weather.
      4. Know the recent conditions. Know the forecast. Know the effects these conditions have on armored vehicles.
      5. Move dismounted infantry in front of armored forces through unfamiliar and densely forested terrain. They can check and verify conditions, act as guides, and provide security.
   6. Some movement tips that apply to most jungle areas:
      1. Red silt soils tend to break down quickly when wet. They may support a single tracked vehicle but become impassible with heavy use.
      2. Streams and creeks that appear fordable but contain yellowish reeds and cloudy water usually have bottoms too soft to support tanks.
      3. Rice paddies in the dry season are usually trafficable to tanks and personnel carriers. However, during the rainy season, they often become impassable. Fields with standing water in the wet season may have a bottom too soft to move on; those containing clear water and green vegetation are usually firm enough for armored vehicles.
      4. River and stream bottoms are usually impassible. The armored vehicle launched bridge can span 57 feet and the rapidly emplaced bridge system used by Strykers can span a 42 foot unprepared gap. Both are more than adequate for most streams encountered in the jungle.
      5. Troops should ensure that the bank shoulders can support the bridge while tanks cross.
      6. When units do not have a bridge, they can use perforated steel planks to provide a firm surface on which tanks can ford small streams.
3. How does the jungle terrain facilitate Japanese tactics? How does this impact U.S. tactics?
4. What challenges does the jungle pose for intelligence, reconnaissance, and targeting?

**Stand 3: The Japanese counterattack and U.S. repositioning of troops**

**Directions:**

Have the terrain operator replicate the view shown in Operator instruction #18

**Visuals:**

3-1: Transition from 158th to 6ID

3-2: ALAMO FORCE

**Orientation:**

N/A

**Description**

Visual 3-1: Transition from 158th to 6ID

1. Fighting would continue on the 28th in the area around and in some cases on Lone Tree Hill, but would prove indecisive.
   1. Colonel Herndon felt that his forward positions were rapidly becoming untenable. The Japanese were apparently moving eastward and northward in some strength and the terrain west of the Snaky River made supply of the two forward battalions extremely difficult.
      1. He radioed to the task force commander that he intended to withdraw to the line of the Snaky River for the night.
      2. The 1st Battalion was on the north of the night's defensive positions and the 2d Battalion was to refuse the left flank by extending the lines south of the road along the Eastern nose of Mt. Saksin.
      3. Colonel Herndon also planned to relieve the 1st Battalion with the 3d the next day. These plans were approved by General Patrick who also ordered Colonel Herndon to cease offensive efforts.
2. On 27 May General Patrick was informed by the ALAMO Force commander, General Krueger, that two battalions of the 163d Infantry would be shipped to Biak from the Toem-Arare beachhead.
   1. At the same time General MacArthur's headquarters and ALAMO Force were considering plans to stage a division in the Wakde-Sarmi area in preparation for operations farther to the west.
      1. The two headquarters decided to send the 6th Infantry Division forward. The Division had recently completed jungle and amphibious training in eastern New Guinea and was ready to move forward.
      2. General Krueger knew that the 163d Regimental Combat Team was scheduled to leave the Wakde-Sarmi area for Biak, but he did not want operations in the former region to be halted for lack of troops.
      3. He therefore recommended that a combat team of the 6th Division be dispatched to Wakde-Sarmi immediately.
   2. Because of the danger of overextending his lines, General Patrick had already decided to halt the westward movement of the 158th Infantry.
      1. He felt that with a garrison of two regimental combat teams the fifteen-mile-long perimeter which the TORNADO Task Force was occupying could be held.
      2. Before westward advance could be resumed, however, Japanese forces which were harassing the southern and eastern flanks of the Toem-Arare beachhead defenses would have to be dispersed.
      3. As a result of an attack by some 200 Japanese on Toem during the night of 27-28 May and because there were indications that the enemy was to make further assaults against the beachhead, the task force commander recommended that no elements of the 163d Regimental Combat Team be shipped to Biak until after the arrival at Toem of a combat team of the 6th Division.
   3. But on the morning of 29 May, General Krueger notified General Patrick that the two battalions of the 163d Infantry would have to leave for Biak the next day.
   4. General Patrick considered that the one remaining infantry battalion of the 163d Regimental Combat Team wasn’t strong enough to hold the Toem-Arare beachhead area. He therefore ordered the 158th Infantry to send one of its battalions back across the Tor River.
   5. On the morning of 29 May the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry, relieved the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, at Arare. General Patrick ordered the rest of the 158th Infantry to improve its positions along the Snaky River and to defend that line until the arrival of a 6th Division regimental combat team on or about 4 June. 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry, was replaced on the Snaky River line by the 3d Battalion of the same regiment.
   6. As a result of this action, and because the Japanese were continuing pressure against the 3d Battalion's Snaky River lines from both the south and west, Colonel Herndon felt that his river positions could not be held much longer.
   7. Worse still, from his point of view, his 1st Battalion had been withdrawn east of the Tor. Without this strength he believed his forces insufficient to hold the line at the Snaky and, at the same time, prevent the Japanese from outflanking his units to the south and cutting his line of communications back to the Toem-Arare beachhead area.
      1. Therefore, after consultation with his battalion commanders, he ordered the 2d and 3d Battalions to withdraw to the east bank of the Tirfoam River, 2,000 yards to the rear, and form a new defense line.
      2. Just past 1500 Colonel Herndon informed General Patrick of the decision to redispose the forward area forces.
      3. At first General Patrick was not inclined to consent to this withdrawal, but upon reconsideration gave his approval.
      4. The movement began immediately, under continuing Japanese pressure from the south.
      5. About 1600 General Patrick arrived at Colonel Herndon's command post, which by then had been moved away from the Tirfoam, where the new defense line was taking shape, to a point approximately 1,800 yards east of that stream.
   8. Shortly thereafter General Patrick reported to General Krueger: "Investigation convinced me that [the] withdrawal [was] unwarranted." General Patrick relieved Colonel Herndon and placed Col. Earle O. Sandlin in command of the 158th Infantry. Col. Sandlin had recently arrived in the area and who had been acting as his chief of staff. **Instructor’s Note:** General MacArthur had placed emphasis on offensive operations, and had relieved commanders for for being insufficiently aggressive. It’s possible this played a role in General Patrick reversing his position and relieveing Colonel Herndon.
   9. Final Operations of the 158th Infantry
      1. While the new line along the Tirfoam was being developed on 30 May by the 158th Infantry, the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 163d Infantry, together with regimental headquarters, departed for Biak.
      2. The 2d Battalion remained on the west bank of Tementoe Creek, which marked the eastern flank of the TORNADO Task Force, but it and the rest of the 163d Regimental Combat Team were soon to follow the other battalions.
      3. Through 30 May, after which elements of the 163d Infantry engaged in little activity in the area, the regiment had lost 46 men killed and 154 wounded. Other elements of the combat team lost 8 men killed, 10 wounded, and 1 missing.
3. Redisposition of the TORNADO Task Force
   1. Upon the departure of the 1st and 3d Battalions, 163d Infantry, many changes were made in the dispositions of the TORNADO Task Force. By the end of the day, the task force was spread out over almost twelve miles of coastline between Tementoe Creek and the Tirfoam River.
      1. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 158th Infantry, and other attached or organic units held perimeters west of the Tor.
      2. Various field artillery units were emplaced at the east side of the Tor's mouth.
      3. Task Force Tornado headquarters was at Arare, close to the principal supply and ammunition dumps, and was protected by the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry.
      4. At no point did the lines of any task force elements extend inland as much as a mile from the beach.
      5. Twenty-one separate perimeters were maintained by the TORNADO Task Force along approximately twelve miles of coastline during the night of 30-31 May 1944.
   2. That night the *Yoshino Force* attacked the Task Force positions. Antiaircraft units were especially spread out to secure the maximum possible protection against low-flying Japanese planes.
   3. These widespread dispositions presented the Japanese with an opportunity to destroy all or parts of the TORNADO Task Force in detail.
      1. Even while the 158th Infantry had been engaged in heavy fighting around Lone Tree Hill, the two arms of *General Tagami*'s planned double envelopment had been slowly closing in on the Toem-Arare area.
      2. Bypassing the 158th Infantry by moving along routes up to four miles inland, the *Yoshino Force* had crossed the Tor at the junction of the river with the Foein on the night of 25-26 May.
      3. General Patrick believed there were only a few Japanese on the southern flank. He halted the advance westward with the intent of dispersing these Japanese forces and brought one battalion of the 158th Infantry east of the Tor to replace the two of the 163d Infantry which had left for Biak.
      4. On 28 May General Patrick estimated Japanese strength in his area to be 2,000-3,000 on the west flank, 300 east of Tementoe Creek, and 300 "in roving bands" south of Toem and Arare.
         1. The TORNADO Task Force had underestimated the strength of Japanese forces in the area. The figure for the number of enemy East of Tementoe Creek was three or four days old on 28 May and apparently was an estimate based on a single aerial reconnaissance.
         2. Instead of roving bands south of the Toem-Arare perimeter, there were over 2,000 troops of the *Yoshino* and *Matsuyama Forces* within three miles of the coast at Toem. Total enemy strength in the Wakde-Sarmi area was still over 8,000 men rather than the less than 4,000 estimated by the TORNADO Task Force.
         3. The few American patrols found no signs of large, organized enemy forces south of the central perimeter.
   4. On the 30th/31st the Japanese Attacked east of the Tor
      1. The fighting was close and brutal, involving hand-to-hand combat in places as the Japanese overran some of the air defense positions.
      2. At 0430 the attack ceased, and the enemy withdrew to the south. Total American losses during the night action were twelve killed and ten wounded. At daylight fifty-two dead Japanese were counted in front of the antiaircraft and infantry positions. There were signs that the enemy had carried away dead or wounded men and it was estimated that the Japanese losses were higher.
   5. Expecting more night attacks on 31 May the TORNADO Task Force worked to strengthen the defenses between the Tor River and Tementoe Creek and reduce the number of separate perimeters along the beach.
      1. TF Tornado also received a message from ALAMO Force that they interpreted to mean that the remainder of the 163d Regimental Combat Team (the 2d Battalion, 163d Infantry, the 167th Field Artillery, engineer units, etc.) was to be sent to Biak immediately.
      2. On receipt of this message General Patrick ordered the elements of the 158th Infantry still west of the Tor to withdraw to the east side of that river and take over the perimeters still held by parts of the 163d Regimental Combat Team.
      3. By nightfall the redisposition was complete - there were now only eight separate perimeters.
      4. In comparison with the previous night, however, the night of 31 May-1 June proved quiet.
4. The Japanese Withdraw
   1. On the morning of 1 June General Patrick was informed by ALAMO Force that the 2d Battalion, 163d Infantry, and the other remaining elements of the 163d Regimental Combat Team would not leave for Biak until a regimental combat team from the 6th Infantry Division arrived at Toem.
   2. General Patrick now considered that the Japanese operations on the south constituted a real threat to the TORNADO Task Force and decided not to make major changes in dispositions until the arrival of the 6th Division unit.
   3. Instead, for the next few days the task force further strengthened its positions in expectation of strong Japanese attacks, which did not come.
      1. Neither *Colonel Yoshino* nor *Colonel Matsuyama* could co-ordinate operations of the two arms of the double envelopment, and because of communication and supply difficulties and the distance involved, *General Tagami* at his command post in the Mt. Saksin area could not exercise tactical control over the two forces. As a result, the two forces could not organize more effective attacks.
      2. The Japanese decided that further efforts to seize the Toem-Arare beachhead would be futile.
   4. On 10 June the *Yoshino Force* started withdrawing southwest across the Tor to take up new positions in the Maffin Bay area. The *Matsuyama Force*, having difficulty reorganizing and collecting food, did not begin retiring westward until two days later.
   5. Meanwhile, the TORNADO Task Force had settled down to await the arrival of a regiment from the 6th Infantry Division before resuming offensive operations.
   6. While enemy attacks east of the Tor gradually stopped after 1 June, small attacks continued west of the river at the bridgehead held through 3 June by the 2d Battalion, 158th Infantry, and after that by the 3d Battalion.
   7. During the first week in June, all elements of the TORNADO Task Force undertook extensive patrolling which produced definite evidence the entire *223d Infantry, 36th Division*, was in the Sarmi area.
   8. Prior to the landings near Wakde on 17 May, the Allies believed that only parts of the *223d* and *224th Infantry Regiments* were stationed in the Sarmi area, but shortly after D Day all three battalions of the *224th Infantry* had been accounted for.
      1. Based on this information and the discovery during the first week of June that the entire *223d Infantry* was originally in the area. Allied intelligence officers raised their pre-assault estimates of Japanese strength from 6,500 men to 10,776—the latter estimate being remarkably close to the Japanese figure of 11,000.
      2. However, the Allies believed that of the original 10,000-odd Japanese soldiers, less than 4,750 Japanese, including 3,500 combat troops, were still alive by the end of the week.
      3. According to Japanese sources, this estimate was low and should have read a total of 8,000 men and over 4,000 combat troops.

Visual 3-2 ALAMO FORCE

1. The Relief of the 158th Infantry
   1. General Patrick now believed that the Japanese would maintain a strong defense against any new offensive westward from the Tor and considered it probable that resistance would center in the Lone Tree Hill area.
      1. He made plans to bypass that area by a shore-to-shore movement to Sarmi Peninsula, whence Lone Tree Hill could be attacked from the rear.
      2. This plan had been temporarily abandoned when the 163d Infantry left for Biak Island and the Japanese started their attacks east of the Tor.
      3. The new strength estimates, coupled with his belief that Lone Tree Hill and Hill 225 would be strongly held, prompted General Patrick to revive the bypassing plan.
      4. The imminent arrival of reinforcements from the 6th Division would provide the troop strength necessary to carry out the maneuver. The TORNADO Task Force commander planned to send one battalion to Sarmi Peninsula on 9 June and another the following day. Scouts had already landed on the peninsula and had reported it undefended.
      5. This movement would be coordinated with a simultaneous drive westward from the Tor River by the 158th Infantry. However, the shore-to-shore movement could not be supported at this time because the necessary naval support vessels were not available because they were engaged in operations off Biak Island, 200 miles to the northwest, or were being used to unload the large ships which brought the 6th Division to Toem.
      6. When the 6th Division began to reach Toem on 5 June the Division Commander requested that none of his troops be employed offensively until at least two regimental combat teams were ashore and his men could become acquainted with the terrain and situation in the area.
   2. The first units of the 6th Division to arrive in the Wakde-Sarmi area were the 1st Infantry Regiment and the 6th Engineer Battalion (C).
      1. The 1st Infantry immediately relieved the part of the 158th Infantry holding the Toem-Arare beachhead perimeter. This allowed the 158th to re-establish position along Tirfoam River.
      2. Late in the morning of 9 June, TASK FORCE ALAMO changed the 158th mission to prepare for an assault on Noemfoor Island in late June or early July.
      3. So the 158th could be prepared to move from Wakde-Sarmi on short notice General Krueger ordered General Patrick not to allow the 158th to become decisively engaged.
      4. On 14 June the 20th Infantry, 6th Division, relieved the 158th Infantry at the Tirfoam. The 158th recrossed the Tor and went into a defensive perimeter on the west bank of Tementoe Creek.
      5. Patrols sent south and east during the next week encountered a few stragglers from the Japanese garrison at Hollandia or from the *Matsuyama Force*.
      6. On the 22d the 158th regimental combat team was relieved of all combat responsibility in the Wakde-Sarmi area and began final preparations for the Noemfoor Island operation.
      7. During its operations in the Wakde-Sarmi area the 158th Regimental Combat Team lost 70 men killed, 257 wounded, and 4 missing. The unit took 11 Japanese prisoners and killed an estimated 920 enemy soldiers.

**Analysis:**

1. Assess the risks of dispersing low density force protection assets in order to provide coverage vice risk to those assets. How can that risk be mitigated?

2. How does the jungle effect a commander’s ability to mass combat power? To shift combat power in response to enemy action? Consider distance, movement rates, effectiveness of communications systems, effectiveness of fires, etc.

**Stand 4: 20th BDE/6 ID attacks**

**Directions:**

Follow as indicated in the description.

**Visuals:**

4-1: 6ID begins operations

4-2: Encircling the hill

4-3: Isolated

4-4: Amphibious assault

4-5: Securing the LOCs

4-6: Clearing the Hill

**Orientation:**

N/A

**Description**

Visual 4-1: 6ID begins operations

1. 6th Infantry Division had not seen combat prior to its arrive to the Wadke-Arare area, but had trained in jungle warfare in Hawaii as part of its mobilization to the Pacific Theater
   1. On 11 June convoy had come the division commander, Maj. Gen. Franklin C. Sibert, and his headquarters, who assumed command of TF TORNADO on 12 June.
   2. Under General Sibert's command TF TORNADO would continue the drive westward toward Sarmi.
   3. The capture of Sarmi and the destruction of Japanese forces west of the Tor River needed to be accomplished quickly, since plans were already being made by ALAMO Force to employ the 6th Division in another operation scheduled for late July – the seizure of an air-base site on the northwestern tip of the Vogelkop Peninsula.
   4. His first challenge was getting the 6th Division unloaded. The division had been hastily and unsystematically loaded at Milne Bay because the transport ships arrived so late that comprehensive loading plans could neither be made nor executed. Moreover, the Toem beaches were mediocre, unloading and storing facilities inadequate, and lighterage was insufficient.
   5. General Sibert's staff estimated that unloading, mopping up, and patrolling would be completed in time for the 20th Infantry to begin a major offensive on 1 July.
      1. TF ALAMO did not agree to this timeline for advancing westward. Surf, beach, and terrain conditions in the Toem-Arare area had proved unsatisfactory for the establishment of a staging base, but Maffin Bay afforded better conditions.
      2. TF ALAMO recognized that quick control over the Maffin Bay area was necessary if the theater were to make any use of the Wakde-Sarmi region as a staging base. So on 18 June General Sibert was ordered eo start an immediate offensive.
   6. The initial objective was the Lone Tree Hill-Hill 225 area, but the advance would continue until all Japanese in the coastal area between the Tirfoam and Sarmi town had been destroyed or dispersed inland.
   7. Beginning on 21 June, the 20th Infantry was to gain a new and more detailed picture of the Lone Tree Hill area.

Build visual

* + 1. Lone Tree Hill contained a veritable maze of Japanese defenses. There were many caves and bunkers on the western cliff - positions hidden from ground observers by tall trees or undergrowth on the cliff face.
    2. There were also a few pillboxes or bunkers in the swampy area between the cliff and the beach west of Rocky Point. Two 75-mm. field pieces, defiladed by rocky outcroppings, were emplaced by the enemy on this beach.
    3. On the hilltop plateau Japanese defensive positions included log and earth dugouts with low silhouettes covered with undergrowth, which were very difficult to locate.
    4. One of the most troublesome installations was a Japanese observation post at the northern part of the hilltop plateau. This post, about one hundred feet off the ground in the branches of a huge tree, was sturdily constructed and cleverly camouflaged. It had withstood air, naval, and artillery bombardments aimed at Lone Tree Hill prior to 20 June. From the post the Japanese could observe movements along the main road to the east of Lone Tree Hill, the entire beach area from Sarmi to Arare, maneuvers on most of the hill itself, and even the west shore of Wadke Island.
    5. Information available to TF TORNADO on 20 June indicated that Lone Tree Hill was defended by 700 to 800 Japanese. Most of these troops were believed to be members of the 3d Battalion, 224th Infantry, plus a few men and weapons of 36th Division artillery—75-mm. mountain guns.
       1. The strength estimate was reasonably accurate—there were really almost 850 Japanese on the Hill but it did not account for the Japanese south of Lone Tree Hill on Hill 225 and the eastern nose of Mt. Saksin.
       2. Japanese troops could move rapidly to reinforce Lone Tree Hill from these areas, and they could also defend the southern approaches to that hill.
       3. The area was under the command of *Headquarters, Right Sector Force*, under *Colonel Matsuyama* of the *224th Infantry* who upon his regiments arrival west of the Tor, took over the sector command from *Major Matsuoka*.
       4. By 20 June the troops on Lone Tree Hill comprised the *1st Battalion, 224th Infantry*, minus one company; the remnants of the deceased *Captain Saito's* 300-man company of *3d Battalion, 224th Infantry*, riflemen and *36th Division* artillerymen; probably a company from the *3d Battalion, 223d Infantry*; elements of the *16th Field Airdrome Construction Unit*; *36th Division* artillery weapons and crews; and, finally, a few men of antiaircraft and service units who had been armed as auxiliary infantry.
       5. Most of the rest of the *224th Infantry* was emplaced south of Lone Tree Hill, on Hill 225 and the eastern nose of Mt. Saksin, along with the bulk of the *16th Field Airdrome Construction Unit*, probably another company of the *223d Infantry*, and an antiaircraft battery converted to infantry.
       6. The total Japanese strength in the Lone Tree Hill-Hill 225-eastern nose area was probably at least 1,800 men.

1. The attack west from the Tirfoam River began on schedule at 0800 on 20 June, with the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, moving along the main coastal road and advancing through Japanese contact to the Snakey River.
2. 20th Infantry operations the morning of 21 June consisted principally of patrolling to locate enemy strong points on and around Lone Tree Hill.
   1. 1st and 3d Battalions undertook most of this scouting while the remainder of the 2d Battalion, together with the regimental Antitank Company, closed on the 1st.
   2. Companies A and B moved south of the main road through the defile toward Hill 225, and both units encountered strong opposition.
   3. By the end of the day the 1st Battalion's positions were essentially the same as they had been in the morning, except that Company B was south of the road and about 600 yards distant from the rest of the battalion.
   4. The battalion's mission was primarily defensive: to probe Japanese defenses on the southern side of Lone Tree Hill and protect the south flank of the 2d and 3d Battalions as the latter units assaulted the hill.
   5. Patrols from 3d Battalion reached the northeast face of Lone Tree Hill during the morning and observed enemy activity on the rough beach below Rocky Point. Other patrols, working toward the eastern slopes of the hill, brought back negative reports which contradicted those obtained at dusk the previous afternoon.

Use operator instructions 19 & 20 to identify the location of the U.S. bunkers near Snakey River. Move to the bunkers and prepare to follow the route shown on #21. Cross the river to the path enter shown on #22, and follow the rock trail as illustrated in #23-25. From there follow the grass trail to the cave as shown in 26 & 27. Retrace the route back to the bunkers to replicate the patrol returning. The route is demonstrated in the video labeled “Snaky River to Cave”.

* + 1. As a result of these negative reports the decision was made for 3d Battalion to attack in the afternoon. However, post war records indicate the Japanese were deliberately not attacking reconnaissance patrols in order to draw larger units in to kill zones.
    2. At 1345, after a fifteen-minute artillery and 4.2-inch mortar preparation, one company moved across the Snaky River, immediately finding the twenty-foot cliff along the eastern side of the shelf which lay between the Snaky River and the central mass of Lone Tree Hill.
    3. The morning patrols had not reported the existence of this cliff nor the Japanese defenses were established along it. Machine gun and rifle fire from the *1st Battalion, 224th Infantry*, soon pinned down the 3d Battalion's leading platoon.
    4. The company commander quickly sent part of his unit northward to identify the Japanese left flank. Eventually intense Japanese fire forced all elements of the 3d Battalion to withdraw to the east bank of the Snaky River for the night.
       1. The 20th Infantry was to continue the assault the next day with the 3d Battalion moving against Lone Tree Hill from the northeast, the 2d Battalion in reserve, and the 1st Battalion remaining in its holding position.
       2. American casualties during the day were two men killed and twenty-four wounded. Initially it was thought that some of these casualties were caused by friendly mortar fire covering the 3d Battalion's patrolling. Later investigation proved that the losses had been caused by enemy fire.
    5. Japanese artillery and mortars usually remained silent throughout the fighting on Lone Tree Hill except when American mortars and artillery began firing. This tricked the Soldiers of the 6th Division into believing that part of their losses resulted from friendly fire.
    6. It’s unknown how many Japanese were killed or wounded in the days fighting. 1st Battalion estimated that its patrols south of Lone Tree Hill had killed about thirty-five of the enemy.
    7. Task force artillery and the 20th Infantry's 81-mm. mortars fired on Lone Tree Hill intermittently throughout the night, concentrating on the Rocky Point area.

Visual 4-2: Encircling the Hill

1. Operations on 22 June started at 0800 when eighteen Wakde-based P-47's strafed Lone Tree Hill, dropped full belly tanks, and set them afire.
   1. The air action ceased at 0820 and was followed by an intense ten-minute artillery concentration.
      1. Infantry action started about 0830 with Company K, two platoons abreast, leading the advance with Company I following close behind.
      2. Company K approached the hill from the northeast and from a point on the beach just west of the deep ravine. Only scattered rifle fire marked the first part of the ascent, for the Japanese were stunned by the preparatory air and artillery fire.
      3. About 1115 the advance platoons had to seek cover from enemy light mortar, machine gun, and rifle fire, most of which seemed to originate in caves and crevices along the sides of the ravine.
      4. Company I, which had been waiting in reserve on the beach, was now dispatched up the hill to reinforce Company K. The combined fire power of the two units drove the Japanese back into their caves, and the assault companies reached the top of Lone Tree Hill.
   2. At 0930 Company L began an attempt to reach the top of the hill from the southeast corner.
      1. The company passed through 1st Battalion units near the village at the entrance to the defile and pushed northwestward.
      2. Japanese infantrymen were seen moving about near the village, and Company M's 81-mm. mortars were called upon to protect Company L's rear by firing on the hamlet.
      3. Four tanks were called forward along the main road to aid in clearing the village and the ground between the settlement and Company L, but marshy terrain and heavy undergrowth prevented the tanks from accomplishing their mission.
      4. Company F was called forward and attached to Company L to protect the latter's flanks and rear.

Have the terrain operator move to #28, then move to #29 to mimic the companies being called forward. Use #30 identify the tree to leave the road to follow Company F.

* + 1. Together the two companies tried to force their way up the southeast slope of Lone Tree Hill, but they were subjected to intense machine gun and rifle fire from the northwest, west, and southwest. The two units withdrew from that face, moved back to the eastern edge of the oval shelf, and marched north to the point at which Companies K and I had started up the hill.
    2. Company F followed K's route to the hilltop, meeting little opposition on the way. Have the terrain operator leave the road next to the identified red tree and follow the marked trail up Lone Tree Hill. Instructions 31 & 32 highlight potentially confusing areas on the trail, and #33 the stop point. While moving, note any bunkers/caves passed by as Japanese positions. This route is illustrated in the video labeled “Road to OP”. Company L advanced about 200 yards south of F's line of march and, since the Japanese remained hidden, had little difficulty reaching the top of the hill.
  1. By 1500 Companies F, I, K, L, and part of Company M had established a common perimeter near the north end of the hilltop.
     1. The 2d Battalion, 20th Infantry, relieved during the morning by the 2d Battalion of the 1st Infantry, was sent forward about 1400 to complete the occupation of Lone Tree Hill.
     2. Following the route employed by Companies F and L in the morning, the battalion (minus Company F) moved across the southern end of the shelf and along the southeastern slope. Advancing cautiously through heavily forested, tangled terrain, by 1700 the battalion reached the head of the wide draw which led to the narrow central part of the hilltop.
     3. The battalion encountered little opposition as they moved up the hill and along the hill crest to a point about 400 yards south of the 3d Battalion. Increasingly strong enemy opposition made it impossible to close the gap between the two before dark.
     4. Hasty positions were set up for the night defenses. Even though part of Company K had been temporarily pinned down by enemy fire during the morning, neither Company K nor Company I had had any real difficulty reaching the top of Lone Tree Hill.
     5. Companies F and L, after changing their direction of attack, had also made their way to the top against negligible opposition, and the 2d Battalion had been delayed more by the terrain than by enemy action.
     6. For the second day in succession the task force commander had reason to believe that the Lone Tree Hill area was not strongly held, and he expected that the hill would be secured shortly.
  2. 3d Battalion found indications during the afternoon that the Japanese had other plans. The battalion perimeter was within sight of the enemy's observation post, which was almost continuously manned although four or five Japanese were shot out of during the afternoon.
     1. So close was the observation post to the 3d Battalion's perimeter that friendly artillery was unable to fire on it, but well-directed enemy artillery fire harassing the 20th Infantry's rear installations indicated that the Japanese were putting their observers to good use.
     2. About 1730 approximately two companies of Japanese under the personal leadership of *Colonel Matsuyama*, poured out of hidden positions and attacked 3d Battalion's perimeter with suicidal fury. Confused fighting, sometimes hand-to-hand, continued well into the night, until it was thought that every Japanese soldier in the northern section of Lone Tree Hill must have been killed.
  3. Although the 2d Battalion's positions were not attacked, the unit could not move to the 3d Battalion's aid. Such a maneuver would have been impossible in the darkness and tangled undergrowth, and the 2d soon found that it, too, was surrounded.
     1. By 2400, the Japanese had completely reversed the tactical situation atop Lone Tree Hill. Early in the afternoon the 20th Infantry had been at the Japanese rear. Now the enemy was at the 20th Infantry's rear, had isolated both the 2d and 3d Battalions of that regiment, and had cut all lines of communication to the base of the hill.
     2. Casualties on the 22d could not be counted because of the confusion resulting from the night attack. However, it was estimated that about 30 Americans had been killed and another 100 wounded, most of them in the 3d Battalion, before the enemy attack waned at midnight.
     3. There were 40 known Japanese dead, the majority of whom had been counted by 1st Battalion patrols on the southern side of Lone Tree Hill. The number of the enemy killed by the 3d Battalion after 1730 could not be estimated, but it is known that *Colonel Matsuyama* was wounded during the action.

1. After repulsing the initial attack, the 3d Battalion expected that the Japanese would reorganizing for another attack. This expectation was correct - *Colonel Matsuyama* did have plans to continue the attack.
   1. On the 22d two companies of the *2d Battalion, 224th Infantry* which had been east of the Tirfoam, arrived to reinforce the *East Sector Force*.

Visual 4-3: Isolated

* + 1. Action on the 23d began at dawn when Japanese troops, some using American weapons and wearing parts of American uniforms, attacked the 2d Battalion, 20th Infantry, from the deep ravine.
    2. The battalion initially held its fire, thinking that the enemy force might be a friendly patrol, and the Japanese were able to advance to within fifteen yards of the battalion lines before being recognized.
    3. An hour of heavy combat occurred, resulting in heavy loses for both sides before the Japanese were forced to retreat.
  1. At 0800 the 2d Battalion was ordered to make contact with 3d, clear the Japanese from the rest of the northern section of the hilltop plateau, and form a two-battalion perimeter.
     1. Moving along the crest soon proved impracticable since the Japanese held strong positions in the 400-yard interval which still separated the two battalions.
     2. 2d Battalion decided to bypass the Japanese. 2d Battalion descended the north side of Lone Tree Hill, and at 1120 resumed movement up Lone Tree Hill along the same route employed by Companies I and K the previous day. The advance was opposed by enemy machine gun, mortar, artillery, and rifle fire, but 2d Battalion, with Company G suffering especially "heavy casualties," slowly fought its way upward.
     3. At 1400 the leading elements began reaching the top of the hill, but it was not until 1630 that the battalion had assembled in an organized perimeter.
     4. The new position was just northwest of 3d Battalion's lines and overlooked the west cliff of Lone Tree Hill but was apparently still not connected with 3d Battalion’s perimeter. The 3rd had held and strengthened its positions during the morning while it sought cover from continuous Japanese mortar and rifle fire and awaited the arrival of reinforcements.
  2. 3d Battalion had received few supplies since reaching the top of Lone Tree Hill on 22 June. The unit had run out of water, and only a heavy rainfall during the night of 22-23 June had prevented dehydration from becoming a major problem. To relieve this situation Company L, 1st Infantry, was ordered to take ammunition, water, and rations to the hilltop plateau.
     1. Company L received the order late on 22 June but only manage to move as far as the northeastern corner of Rocky Point before dark. At 0800 the next morning they resumed movement up the hill meeting little opposition but was soon pinned down as Japanese forces moved in behind it to cut the line of communication down the hill.
     2. Company L soon ran out of ammunition because the supplies the carried did not include extra ammunition. Despite help from elements of the Antitank and Service Companies, 20th Infantry, Company L was only able to maintain intermittent contact with the 3d Battalion, 20th Infantry.
     3. It was not until late afternoon, after the 2d Battalion had arrived atop Lone Tree Hill that Company L, 1st Battalion was relieved. By that time the company had suffered numerous casualties and had lost much of the matériel it had been carrying up the hill.
     4. Neither 2d nor 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, received appreciable amounts of supplies during the day. Only the efforts of small groups of volunteers kept these units supplied with enough food and ammunition to carry on the fight.
     5. To support the small carrying parties 1st Infantry sent two machine gun platoons and two 37-mm. antitank guns forward to the foot of Rocky Point. With this covering fire the supply groups managed to fight their various ways up and down the hill and evacuated 300 wounded men during the day.
  3. The evening of 23 June brought another *224th Infantry* counterattack aimed at both 2d and 3d Battalions' perimeters.
     1. The attacks came from the east side of Lone Tree Hill, the Japanese apparently having moved around the north side of the hill.
     2. The initial assault culminated in a bayonet charge, which was repulsed by rifle and machine gun fire with heavy losses to the Japanese.
     3. Despite this defeat, small groups of the enemy continued suicidal attacks throughout the night of 23-24 June.
  4. It was possible to bypass Lone Tree Hill, isolate it, and starve out the Japanese garrison, but there were two reasons why General Sibert did not do so.
     1. Lone Tree Hill dominated the Maffin Bay area, and as long as the Japanese held it Maffin Bay could not be safely employed as a staging area.
     2. By the time the task force realized on the 23rd that a strong Japanese force held the hill, 2d and 3d Battalions of the 20th Infantry were cut off atop Lone Tree Hill.

Visual 4-4: Amphibious assault

* 1. When the hill still hadn’t been captured by dark on 23 June the general decided to outflank it by a shore-to-shore maneuver and then continue the attack from both west and east.
     1. He ordered 1st Infantry, reinforced by 6th Reconnaissance Troop, to seize the beach just west of Rocky Point on the morning of 24 June.
        1. The regiment was to clean out the western side of Lone Tree Hill and prevent any more Japanese reinforcements from reaching it.
        2. For the shore-to-shore maneuver, the 1st Infantry chose Companies K and I. Company K boarded ten LVT's at the beach near the Tirfoam River and moved to the west side of Rocky Point. The LVT's were protected by the 6th Reconnaissance Troop aboard thirteen LVT(A)'s armed with 37-mm. guns. Have the terrain operator use #34 to orient on the landing craft, then move to #35 followed by #36 & #37 to replicate the landing.
        3. Both groups of amphibious vehicles were fired on by Japanese 75-mm. guns, but Company K made a safe landing at 0900 hours.
        4. Attempting to move inland, the company was immediately pinned down on the narrow beach by enemy fire originating from along the west face of Lone Tree Hill.
        5. The LVT's, again protected by the LVT(A)'s, made a return trip with Company I, 1st Infantry, which landed on the right of Company K at 1200.
        6. About 1330 four tanks of Company C, 44th Tank Battalion, transported by LCT's, arrived at the beachhead, which was receiving increasing machine gun and rifle fire.
        7. Upon their arrival the tanks covered the evacuation of wounded and the landing of supplies by firing on Japanese positions in the swampy woods between the beach and the west cliff of Lone Tree Hill.
        8. One LVT loaded with wounded men was sunk about 175 yards off Lone Tree Hill by Japanese 75-mm. fire. All the men were rescued by an LVT(A), which succeeded in silencing the enemy artillery weapon.
        9. Companies I and K were unable to make any progress inland. The *223d Infantry* fighting from defensive positions in the swampy woodland prevented an advance.
        10. The four tanks attempted to move off the beach to attack these positions but found that they could not maneuver off the shoreline. Have the terrain operator move forward to replicate the view shown in #38.
        11. The tanks remained on the beach for the night to protect the exposed infantrymen, but the 6th Reconnaissance Troop returned to the vicinity of the Tirfoam River mouth at darkness.
  2. On top of Lone Tree Hill 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, began to clear the Japanese from the many caves and crevices on the hilltop plateau, employing flame throwers, bazookas, rifle grenades, hand grenades, BAR's, high explosives, and even gasoline.
     1. While this action continued, the 2d Battalion, 20th Infantry, aided by Company L of 1st Infantry, secured the supply route up the hill.
     2. By nightfall there were definite signs that Japanese resistance in the northern section of Lone Tree Hill was weakening, and during the night of 24-25 June there were no major counterattacks, although harassing mortar, grenade, and rifle fire continued.
     3. Headquarters of the 3d Battalion, 20th Infantry, and Company M of the same regiment moved across the Snaky River in the afternoon and established a perimeter from which Company M's heavy weapons could aid in the mopping-up operations.
  3. Despite the weakening of Japanese resistance, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, and Company L, 1st Infantry, continued to suffer heavy casualties during the day.
     1. At dusk 2d Battalion effectives numbered 330 men, and the 3d Battalion had 322 effectives left.
     2. The losses of Companies I and K, 1st Infantry, could not be ascertained because not all the wounded and dead had been evacuated and because communications had broken down at intervals throughout the day.
     3. However, at least 9 men had been killed and 37 wounded, and that the dead included 2 Company K officers.

1. The next day, 25 June, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, now reinforced by both Companies L and M, 1st Infantry, and Company B, 6th Engineers, continued clearing the northern part of the hilltop plateau, and the eastern side of the Hill where scattered Japanese still held positions. Flame throwers, demolition charges, bazookas, and hand grenades all proved successful in eliminating Japanese resistance and sealing or clearing caves and crevices. Move to view shown in #9, and follow the path starting to the left of the tree with the path entry shown in #40. Follow the marked path to the view shown in #41. This move is illustrated in the video labeled “OP to Bunker”.
   1. The task was easier on the 25th as the Japanese slowly were killed or sealed off in their caves.
   2. Casualties continued to mount - the 2d Battalion, 20th Infantry, had only about two hundred effectives by the end of the day - but many of the losses were not due to Japanese action.
   3. Many men were evacuated over the now secure supply route to the top of the hill as they fell from exhaustion or became sick.
   4. On the beach west of the Hill Companies I and K, 1st Infantry, had little success in expanding their beachhead. The tanks proved useless in the area and were therefore withdrawn to Maffin No. 1.
      1. The two infantry companies, pinned down during the morning, kept up a continuous mortar barrage against Japanese positions in the swamp to the south, against the western cliff of Lone Tree Hill.
      2. This mortar fire, coupled with the operations on the plateau, began to have the desired effect during the afternoon, and Companies I and K were able to push their defenses beyond the narrow beachhead slightly southward and westward .
      3. Once or twice during the afternoon, patrols were able to reach the top of Lone Tree Hill from the northwest corner of the point and established contact with 20th Infantry units.
      4. Late in the afternoon Company M, 1st Infantry, operating from the east side of the point, managed to push a patrol around the shore to establish contact with Company K.
      5. Though Companies I and K could find little tangible evidence of the results of their operations, they had actually wiped out the *223d Infantry's* defense force in the area just west of Lone Tree Hill.
   5. By dusk on the 25th, it had become obvious that the combined efforts of the 3d Battalion, 1st Infantry, and the 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, had either cleared out the northern half of Lone Tree Hill or had forced the Japanese to withdraw. The latter conclusion was the more nearly correct.
      1. The *36th Division* decided on 25 June to withdraw the bulk of the *Center* and *Right Sector Forces* west of the Woske River and establish new defensive positions, in order to preserve the *223d Infantry*, the majority of which had not been committed to the fight around Lone Tree Hill.
      2. Only the remnants of the *224th Infantry* would remain east of the Woske, and they were to withdraw into rough terrain southwest of Mt. Saksin.
   6. At nightfall on the 25th, General Sibert estimated that his three forward battalions had lost approximately 140 men killed and 850 wounded and evacuated, including those who had to be sent back to the rear because of wounds, sickness, heat exhaustion, or psychoneurotic disorders.
   7. Known Japanese dead in the northern part of the hill numbered 344, but an unknown number had been thrown over the west cliff, sealed in caves, or carried off by withdrawing remnants of the Japanese defense force.
   8. According to Japanese sources, the Japanese had lost about 500 men killed and another 300 wounded in the Lone Tree Hill-Hill 225-Mt. Saksin area.
   9. By noon on 25 June, it was apparent to General Sibert that only mopping-up operations remained to be accomplished on and near Lone Tree Hill. For all practical purposes, that area had been secured.

Visual 4-5: Securing the LOCs

1. Final Operations in the Wakde-Sarmi Area Mopping Up by the 6th Division
   1. As the 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, were combat ineffective General Sibert decided to relieve those two units with the 3d Battalion, 63d Infantry, who would finish mopping up operations. The relief of 2d and 3d Battalions, 20th Infantry, was accomplished by 1500 on 26 June.
   2. To that time the regiment had lost 83 men killed, 484 wounded, and 10 missing. The unit estimated that it had killed 781 Japanese, by far most of them in operations on Lone Tree Hill during the period 22 through 25 June.

Visual 4-6: Clearing the Hill

* 1. On 27 June the 3d Battalion, 63d Infantry, began mopping up on the top of Lone Tree Hill. These operations proved more difficult than anticipated, for a few Japanese machine gun nests were still active on the southern section. But by dusk on 30 June, no more live Japanese were to be found. On the same day the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, pushed through the defile south of the hill and found only a few stragglers in its zone.
  2. During operations at the Lone Tree Hill area from 20 through 30 June, American losses were approximately 150 killed, 550 wounded, and 400-500 evacuated from the forward area because of sickness, noncombat injuries, and combat fatigue.
  3. During the same period TF TORNADO claimed 942 dead Japanese were counted in the area from the Snaky River west to the Woske and from the beach to the southern slopes of the defile, and TF TORNADO estimated that 400 more had been sealed in caves at Lone Tree Hill.
     1. It’s unknown how these casualties were divided among the Japanese, but it is likely that at least 750 of the dead were members of the *224th Infantry* and most of the rest from other units of the *Right Sector Force*.
     2. The *16th Field Airdrome Construction Unit*, for instance, had been practically wiped out, as had the two companies of the *223d Infantry* which had been placed under *Colonel Matsuyama's* command.
     3. That over 1,300 Japanese were killed in the coastal area from the Tor to the Woske by 30 June does not appear to be an exaggerated claim.
  4. Although clearing enemy forces from the Lone Tree Hill area practically assured the security of the Maffin Bay staging area, General Sibert believed that to make the region entirely safe it would be necessary to drive the enemy out of the terrain between the Woske and Tor for at least 3,000 yards inland.
     1. Operations began on 1 July when the 1st Infantry extended the perimeter along the coast to the Woske, completed by 12 July.

**Analysis:**

1. How do commanders balance the risk of momentum v. bypass criteria?
2. Mobility in the jungle is restricted by thick vegetation, steep grades, and severe terrain. Vehicular mobility, whether wheeled or tracked, is almost completely restricted to roads and trails. How can commanders improve mobility or find alternate avenues? Consider water & air avenues of approach.
3. A unit’s tactical effectiveness in the jungle depends on the availability of supplies. However, a formation’s largest vulnerability lies in its exposed LOCs and the immobility of its bases of supply and support.

1. Lack of roads and limited helicopter landing zones will hinder resupply and casualty evacuation requiring forces to carry additional supplies and casualties extended distances.
2. How can commanders take advantage of small-scale joint operations to overcome terrain limitations?
3. What are the risks of operations with limited ability to conduct reconnaissance?

**Stand 5: Aftermath**

**Directions:**

Return to default view.

**Visuals:**

5-1: The Campaign Concludes

**Orientation:**

N/A

**Description**

Visual 5-1: The Campaign Concludes

1. The End of the Operation
   1. When TF ALAMO chose the 6th Division to seize an air-base site on the Vogelkop, he decided to retain one of the division's regimental combat teams at Wakde-Sarmi as a reserve.
   2. Even if this combat team were not required on the Vogelkop, it would be insufficient to defend the Maffin Bay-Wakde area and, at the same time undertake the offensive patrolling necessary to maintain contact with Japanese forces in the area and to keep those forces away from Maffin Bay. And the 31st Division began arriving on 14 July to relieve 6ID. The relief was complete by the 18th, with 20/6ID remaining in the TORNADO area.
   3. The 20th unit remained attached to the 31st Division until 21 August and left the area for the Vogelkop on the 26th. Except for the 124th Regimental Combat Team, the 31st Division closed in the Wakde-Sarmi area by 15 August.
   4. Work went on at the Maffin Bay staging area, and during the period 18 July-31 August a daily average of 2,500 tons of various supplies were unloaded.
      1. During the same period the 31st Division lost 39 men killed, 195 wounded, 34 injured, and 3 missing.
      2. The division killed 294 Japanese, found 497 dead, and captured 14 others.
   5. TF ALAMO declared that the Wakde-Sarmi operation was over on 2 Sept.
2. The Results of the Wakde-Sarmi Operation
   1. The importance of the Wakde-Sarmi operation cannot be measured in terms of casualties.
   2. From 17 May through 1 September American losses in the area were approximately 400 men killed, 1,500 wounded or injured in action, and 15 missing.
   3. During the same period about 3,870 Japanese had been killed in the area and 51 Japanese had been taken prisoner.
      1. How many more of the original Japanese garrison of some 11,000 had died of sickness and starvation or had been buried in caves at Lone Tree Hill could not be determined.
      2. It was estimated that as of 1 September only 2,000 effective Japanese combat troops were left in the Wakde-Sarmi area.
   4. More important than the enemy casualties were the fact that two reinforced Japanese regimental combat teams had been destroyed as effective fighting forces and eliminated as a threat in the Southwest Pacific.
   5. In return for their losses, the Allies had obtained a valuable staging and air-base site.
   6. The Wakde Island airdrome quickly proved its value by enabling the Allied Air Forces to support not only operations within the Southwest Pacific but also those in the Central Pacific.
   7. The Fifth Air Force flew bombardment missions from Wakde against Biak, Noemfoor, enemy installations on the Vogelkop, Halmahera, Morotai, and, in the Central Pacific Area, against the Palaus and other islands in the Carolines.
   8. Fifth Air Force planes and Seventh Fleet land-based reconnaissance bombers from Wakde made substantial contributions to the success of the Central Pacific's mid-June invasion of the Marianas by striking enemy air and fleet installations in the Palaus and reporting the movements of Japanese fleet units within flying range.
   9. Since the Japanese fields on Biak were not captured in time for Southwest Pacific aircraft to undertake from that island any missions in support of the Mariana operation, the Wakde field had to carry a far greater load than was originally intended for it.
   10. Finally, from Wakde, Seventh Fleet PB4Y's initiated the first regular air reconnaissance of islands in the Philippines since early 1942.
   11. The Fifth Air Force controlled operations from Wakde until late August, when the Thirteenth Air Force took over the field. The latter unit afterwards supported the mid-September invasions of Morotai and the Palaus with numerous bombing and reconnaissance missions from Wakde.
   12. For ground forces, the Wakde-Sarmi area proved equally valuable. In operations there the 6th Infantry Division and part of the 158th Regimental Combat Team, and innumerable attached units received their first combat experience.
   13. The value of the area for training was obvious, but the region was equally valuable as a staging base. The whole or parts of five different task forces—sent to Biak, Noemfoor, the Vogelkop Peninsula, and the Philippines—were staged from the Arare-Toem beaches or the shores of Maffin Bay.
   14. Had available assault shipping been used for long trips from eastern New Guinea bases to objectives beyond Wakde, the pace of operations in the Southwest Pacific would have slowed.
   15. Instead, many units were moved to Maffin Bay by noncombatant vessels, picked up there by assault ships, and taken on to new objectives to the north and west, the nearest of which was Biak Island.

**Analysis:**

None

**Integration**