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SECURITY INFORMATION

ACTION REPORT

COMMANDER TASK GROUP 86.5

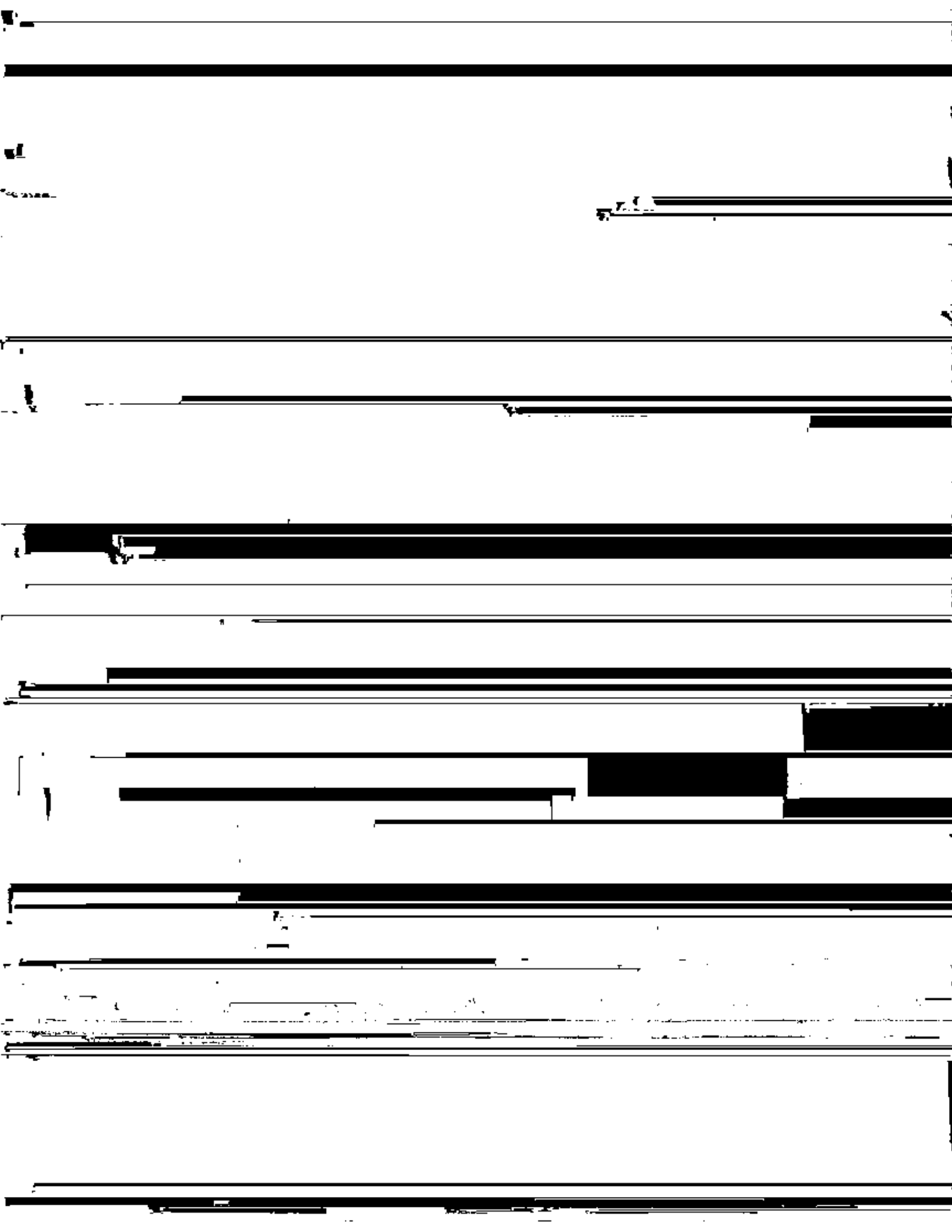
SERIAL 0040

25 JULY 1943

ACTION REPORT: OPERATION HUSKY: SICILIAN CAMPAIGN.

REPORT COVERS CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD  
OF BLUE HEADQUARTERS VESSEL'S OPER-  
ATIONS UNDER COMMANDER TASK GROUP 86.5  
OF JOSS FORCE IN LANDING ARMY FORCES  
ON BEACHES TO CAPTURE THE PORT OF  
LICATA, ALSO FORWARDS REPORTS OF  
LCI (L)'S AND LST'S ENGAGED IN MISSION.

ORIGINAL



To: Commander LCI(L)'s.

Via: Commander Group Ten and Commander Flotilla Four.

Subject: Beaching Operations 10 July, 1943, Report of.

1. This vessel arrived in the transport area off Blue beach at 0115, 10 July, 1943. At 0245 we proceeded without signal in column formation behind the 89 at various courses and speeds toward the control vessel off Blue beach. Shortly before reaching the control vessel the signal was given to form an open Vee formation, and we were in this formation as we passed the control vessel, headed for the right flank of the beach. At 0345 we passed through a formation of LCVT's, and on signal from the 89 we stopped to allow them to proceed us in to the beach.

At 0415 an attempt was made to land on the left flank of the beach, but this landing was not made due to the fact that the ship's already in there were apparently experiencing difficulty, and a new attempt was made at the center of the beach. When we were about 250 yds. off the beach, machine gun nests on both bows opened, and word was received from the troop officers that it would be impossible to unload without heavy casualties. We retracted and made a third attempt on the right flank. This was met by the same heavy machine gun fire, and at 0510 this attempt was abandoned.

In view of the fact that dawn was breaking and other ship's were visible, we requested further orders from the 89. The final landing was made at 0625, on the right flank of the beach. As soon as the troops had left the ship a line was passed to the LCI(L) 88 which was lying broadside to the beach. At 0645 Ensign Christopher, USNR reported on board requesting passage to the IST 349, or to Bizerte. At 0650 we retracted, and at 0655 parted the line which

had been passed to the SS. Shortly after the line to the SS parted, either a hit, or near miss by mortar fire was noted on the SS. A further attempt was made to put a line aboard the SS, but we were unable to raise anyone on board. At 0725 we left Blue beach, and proceeded as per instructions to Bizerte. At 1300 we were forced to reduce to a more economical speed due to the lack of fuel. Later fuel reports made further reductions necessary, and we arrived off Bizerte at 0700, 11 July, 1943.

There were no casualties aboard this vessel, and damage from machine gun fire was negligible.

*R. F. Salton*

R. F. Salton, Lt. (jg) USCGR.

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First Indorsement

COMMANDER,  
LCI(L) GROUP TEN,  
24 July, 1943.

1. Forwarded.

11 939

*A. C. Unger*

A. C. UNGER, Lt. Comdr.,  
U. S. Coast Guard.



D-1 DAY

1535 Passed Gozo Light abeam to starboard.  
 2200 Biscayne increasing speed and gaining distance ahead.  
 2230 Losing visual contact with LSTs. Reduced speed to drop back.  
 2235 Lost visual contact with Biscayne.  
 ----- Ficked up unidentified LSTs astern and directed them to follow.  
 No discernible LST formation visible.  
 2328 Sighted Queen reference vessel.  
 2330 C/C to 012 (t).  
 2335 Sighted Charlie reference vessel.

D-DAY

0000 H-165 Passed Queen abeam to port.  
 0001 H-164 Sighted flares and explosions over land to starboard.  
 0020 H-145 Sighted Biscayne passing ahead from port to starboard.  
 C/C to 008 (t).  
 0021 H-144 Searchlights appeared on beaches ahead.  
 0025 H-140 Searchlight extinguished.  
 0030 H-135 Sighted signal of Blue reference vessel.  
 0105 H-100 Searchlights on beach re-appeared.  
 0115 H-90 Anchored LSTs in company. NB Due to errors in navigation LSTs, were not anchored as close in as planned, nor were they in prescribed and planned formation.  
 Searchlights at this time were pointing to seaward.  
 LCVP substituted for damaged scout boat departed for beach.  
 During this interval H.Q. ship cruised around transport area picking up blue LSTs. Found also some yellow LSTs in blue area.  
 All LSTs lowering boats.  
 0130 H-75 LCVPs moving to rendezvous area.  
 0145 H-60 Searchlights on beach extinguished.  
 0146 H-59 Five searchlights again probing seaward.  
 0148 H-57 LCVPs left rendezvous area for line of departure.  
 0200 H-45 First wave of LCVPs passed line of departure.  
 0235 H-10 Heard gunfire in blue beach area.  
 0246 H+1 Radio silence broken by CTF.  
 0300 H+15 First wave of LCI(L)s passed transport area headed in.  
 0311 H+26 First wave of LCVPs beached.  
 0315 H+30 Second wave of LCI(L)s passed transport area headed in.  
 0323 H+38 Second wave of LCVPs beached  
 0325 H+40 Bomb burst off port quarter of H.Q. Ship.  
 0331 H+46 First boats retracted and returning to transport area.  
 0332 H+47 Considerable firing on blue beach.  
 0340 H+55 Searchlights apparently extinguished by gunfire.  
 0347 H+62 Several grass fires burning above blue beach.  
 0353 H+68 Sound of gunfire on blue beach ceased.  
 0355 H+70 First wave of LCI(L)s beached.  
 0422 H+97 First wave of LCI(L)s retracted.  
 0430 H+105 Regimental command wave, LCI(L) 88, 2 LCVP, 1 Duck, departed for beach.  
 0450 H+125 First LCVPs returned to transport area to be hoisted.  
 0455 H+130 Air attack.  
 0457 H+132 Remainder of LCVPs returned to transport area to be hoisted.  
 0520 H+155 Commander Boat Flotilla One reported all operative boats had retracted and returned. NB From five to eight were stranded, four of these had beached to eastward of rocks on eastern end of blue beach.

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D-DAY

0520 H4155 Air Attack.  
0530 H4165 LCI(L)s returning. Wave leader reported all retracted and landing proceeding satisfactorily.  
0530 H4165 Nine ducks launched by LST 318 and proceeded to beach.  
0532 H4167 Shore battery fired on ships. No hits.  
0540 H4175 Remainder of LCI(L)s headed out for rendezvous.  
0546 H4181 Flight of P-40's over blue beach fired upon by own ships.  
0555 H4190 Directed LST 388 to beach with pontoon causeway. SC 695 escorted remainder of Ducks to beach.  
0555 H4190 LCI(L) formation departed for Bizerte.  
0558 H4193 Proceeded seaward with SC 697 to pick up and direct arriving LCTS.  
0610 Picked up LCTs making best of their way. Sent those with tanks in with SC 697. Gathered the remainder of blue LCTs and led them in to blue reference vessel.  
0627 LCTs beginning to beach. LCT 242 and LCI(L) 88 which latter had stranded were damaged by enemy shore battery.  
0629 Established radio contact with blue beach. Unloaded LCTs directed to proceed Dime or to Warry LSTs in accordance with plan.  
0755 Shore battery out of action.  
0840 Moreno delivered causeway to LST 318. She was directed to assist LCI(L) 88 but accomplished nothing in that direction.  
0902 Army requested cessation of all naval gunfire.  
0930 LST 388 beached and landed causeway.  
1005 LST 318 beached and landed causeway.  
1020 LST 332 beached and took causeway from LST 388.  
1030 LST 388 retracted.  
1045 LST 317 failed in attempt at beaching and lost stern anchor.  
NB The handling of this ship was severely censurable throughout the whole of Husky operation.  
1245 LST 318 came adrift and was forced to retract without having accomplished landing of 155 mm guns.  
1330 Air raid.  
1415 LST 317 beached and took causeway.  
1420 LST 373 (yellow) beached and took causeway. NB LSTs 310, 315, 316, 349 unloading by LCT.  
1425 LST 332 retracted.  
1435 LST 338 beached to take causeway.  
1630 Air raid.  
1700 LST 317 retracted.  
1810 Air raid.  
1900 LST 373 retracted.  
1930 LST 338 retracted.  
2140 Commenced unloading LST 158 (yellow) by LCT.  
0432 LST 349 completed unloading by LCT.  
0500 Unloaded LSTs directed to rendezvous.  
0625 LST 318 beached and took causeway to finish unloading.  
0730 LST 158 (yellow) beached to finish unloading.  
0740 Commenced forming convoy JTM3 at Roger Item.  
0810 Air raid on blue beach. LST 158 hit by bomb amidships, torched off and was gutted.  
LST 318 retracted. All blue ships unloaded except LST 388 with deck load of ammunition.  
Convoy JTM3 underway for Bizerte.  
0904 CTG 16.5 received orders to go ashore on blue beach. Turned  
1015 convoy command over to C.O. LST 318.

421 3/6 | LST 315

## Chronological order of events of "D" day, July 10, 1943.

Hour.	Event.
0001	Fires from bombs lighting up shore.
0020	U.S.S. BECAYNE crossed bow from port to starboard.
0100	Large searchlight shining seaward from beach.
0105	Approaching beach with LST's eastern on course of 0000.
0115	Searchlight from beach sweeping sea again.
0130	LST's anchoring off shore. Two large searchlights on beach shining seaward again.
0145	LST's lowering small boats. Small boats from LST's in water cruising around anchored LST's. Lights on beach off. Fires still burning.
0148	Lights sweeping seaward again.
0150	Five large searchlights playing on sea. Three red flares at about 1 minute intervals off port side. Small boats from LST's loading up. Wind and sea subsided somewhat.
0215	Flashes from bomb bursts or gunfire to right of fires on shore.
0245	Anchored offshore in about 30 fathoms of water. Searchlights on shore turned on again, gunfire from shore.
0253	Anchor aweigh. Red flares on beach off port beam. Searchlight still playing over sea.
0258	Anchored once again. Gunfire heard on beach in vicinity of searchlights.
0311	Wave of LCIs passing off port beam on way in to beach.
0315	Gunfire 2 miles east of Blue beach.
0316	Gunfire ceased.
0323	Second wave of LCIs passing off bow on way into beach.
0330	Gunfire one mile west of blue beach.
0331	Bomb burst off port quarter.
0332	Small boats returning.
0335	Gunfire 110 degrees from rendezvous area.
0337	Gunfire continues.
0340	Small boat alongside. Heavy gunfire on beach.
0347	Gunfire put out searchlight on blue beach.
0353	White light appears on blue beach.
0353	Stead red light appears on blue beach.
0355	Gunfire ceases on blue beach.
0417	Bomb burst off port beam.
0420	Two small boats alongside to disembark Army personnel.
0430	Four LCT's reported beached.
0431	Flares from airplanes 090 degrees.
0444	Flares from airplanes -west of blue beach.
0450	Army personnel left ship.

Events of "D" day, continued.

Hour	Event.
0455	Five small boats returning from beach. Battleship or heavy cruiser off port quarter bombarding beach.
0457	Anti-aircraft fire going up from ships.
0520	Boat flotilla one returned. Boats went in at 0305. No boat casualties reported. Heavy anti-aircraft fire being put up, this vessel opened fire on swooping enemy plane. Cruisers and destroyers still blasting beach.
0525	Cruisers and LCGs are bombarding shore installations. Anti-aircraft fire off port bow.
0530	LCI 89 reports that little or no trouble at blue beach. Landings made and troops disembarked.
0531	Plane launched from LST 386.
0532	Shore battery firing at anchored ships, one hit off port beam and another off port quarter.
0536	Minesweep on LCI 88 from shore battery.
0540	Second plane launched from LST 386. Seventeen LCIs returning to rendezvous.
0546	Several F-40s passed over beach and were fired upon by landing craft and combat ships.
0555	LST 382 ordered into beach. SC 695 taking ducks into beach. Haze of smoke from gunfire covers beach.
0558	Alongside SC 697, Commander ordered her to find LCTs and escort them to beach.
0620	Met several Blue LCTs considerably off shore. Ordered them to disembark vehicles on beach.
0627	Heading for beach escorting LCTs. The beach now being shelled, enemy apparently not able to sight targets. LCTs disembarked vehicles on beach as fire ceased. LCTs returned to unload LSTs. One LCT damaged by enemy gunfire.
0650	All LSTs ordered to delay beaching until further orders.
0651	Cruiser on port beam firing on shore installations again.
0705	Shore battery firing on ships landing on blue beach.
0750	LCTs being ordered to marry LSTs
0755	Standing out toward sea to check on blue LSTs
0805	LSTs moving in closer to beach which is being shelled again by cruisers. LST 388 released pontoons about five miles off shore and is towing them in.
0833	Went out alongside LST 317 and ordered her to move into beach. Cruiser shelling shore installations in city of LICATA.
0840	Ordered tug to attempt salvage on LCI 88.
0930	U.S.S. LST 388 brought pontoons ashore. Other blue beach LSTs are unloading via LCTs
0935	Anchored off blue beach approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.
0950	Cruiser and destroyers again bombarding LICATA.
1017	LCT 318 beached and placed pontoons ahead to beach, unloaded via pontoons.
1020	U.S.S. LST 382 beached and began unloading.
1045	LST 317 beached and lost stern anchor.
1105	LST 317 retracted anchored offshore.
1330	Airraid, high altitude, no apparent damage.

Chronological order of events of "D" day, July 10, 1943.  
continued.

Hour.	Event.
1400	Several small short lived air raids. Sail ships at work unloading on beach by pontoons, or using LCTs.
1630	Air raid, bombs dropping off port beam.
1810	LST 317 off beach. General quarters- short air-raid.

LST 316  
LST 315  
LCT(2) 89  
LCT(2) 93  
LCT(2) 88