

RG-16: WHITNEY PAPERS

PERSONAL

FILES

GUERRILLA

RESISTANCE

MOVEMENT

ON CEBU,

1944

*Col. Whitney*

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS  
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA  
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF

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THE GUERRILLA RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN CEBU

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. GENERAL BACKGROUND . . . . .	1
II. THE JOINT FENTON-CUSHING COMMAND . . . . .	2
III. THE CUSHING UNIT AND THE CEBU AREA COMMAND . . . . .	5
IV. PERSONALITIES IN CEBU. . . . .	7

MAP: Guerrilla Organization and Radio Communications

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THE GUERRILLA RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN CEBU

15 November 1944

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND:

Cebu Island was invaded by the Japanese in April 1942. Cebu City with a population of 150,000, second largest city in the Philippines, was quickly taken. USAFFE forces did considerable demolition work in Cebu City, and promptly took to the hills. The Japs were thereby enabled to occupy all the east, central and west coast cities with little effort. The northern and southern parts of the island were free of USAFFE forces, and the Japs, after patrolling the areas, left small garrisons behind to keep the peace.

The action of USAFFE forces in not putting up an initial determined resistance to the invader, enabled them to escape to the hills with a large quantity of arms, ammunition and supplies. Guerrilla units were quickly reformed in the hills. As soon as surface resistance had been overcome, the Japanese reduced most of their garrisons and left many of the towns under the control of puppet constabulary troops. Several prominent pre-war mayors and government officials were induced by the Japanese to stay at their posts in "puppet" capacities. The power of guerrilla units soon made itself felt in the cities, and most of the puppet officials became secret collaborators of the guerrillas. Those who did not collaborate were either eliminated or educated into a state of neutrality.

The guerrilla resistance movement in Cebu is the story of the growth of the CUSHING-FENTON unit. With the occupation of Central Cebu by the Japanese, several small guerrilla units had emerged in the lightly garrisoned northern and southern parts of the island. By mid-1942, the northern units had emerged under the command of Harry FENTON. The southern and central Cebu units were organized under Lt. Col. James CUSHING. These two Americans were the strongest leaders in their respective areas. FENTON took into his command any person with a rifle. These men were for the most part ex-USAFFE personnel, and at least partly trained.

Harry FENTON, commander of the original northern Cebu guerrilla group, is reported to be properly Aaron FEINSTEIN, an American 33 years of age and married to a Filipina. He is said to have been an enlisted man on duty at the Sternberg Hospital in Manila and later purchased his discharge to become a radio announcer. Before surrender, he had been an announcer at KZRC, Cebu City, and made many anti-Japanese pronouncements on his programs. He claims he was commissioned by General CHYNOWETH and then went to the hills before surrender. He is said to have trusted no one. He was hard to approach but was friendly after he became acquainted. He usually did business through his adjutant and was hard to contact directly. Except for those nearest him, no one seemed to like him. He was feared but not loved by his men; was loyal to the US. His feelings toward the Japanese and all spies and collaborators were violent, and he hung all such personnel that his men could capture. He is reported to have been responsible for the execution of many innocent civilians. He was bold and outspoken to the point of being indiscreet in his public announcements.

James M. CUSHING, originally in command of the southern Cebu guerrillas, was a mining engineer, reported to be of mediocre accomplishment, in the Philippines before the war. He claims he was commissioned a captain by General CHYNOWETH before surrender. He is about 37, born in the United States of slightly Mexican parentage. He speaks English slowly and vividly with a slight accent; has a dual personality, one cold,

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- 1 -

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hard and unforgiving, the other soft, sentimental and almost childlike. He loses his temper easily but just as quickly repents. He is well liked by and enjoys the loyalty of his officers, enlisted men and civilians. He admires the civilians and gives them all possible protection. He hates the Japanese and fights them fearlessly along with his men; asking nothing of them he wouldn't do himself. He is a good leader and controls his combat personnel completely. He seems to be respected by other island commanders and gets along particularly well with Negros.

II. THE JOINT FENTON-CUSHING COMMAND:

Recognizing the necessity for joint action against the Japanese, these two leaders effected a dual command in mid-1942. This command placed the various officers from each of the separate units into a General Staff and allotted areas of control to subordinate leaders whose units were constituted into battalions. The headquarters was divided into two sections: the administrative at FENTON's camp at Maslog, and the combat headquarters about seven miles distance at CUSHING's camp at Mangalon Heights. Organizationally, the union was a happy one, for despite antithetical personalities, the capabilities of each complemented the other. FENTON had a knack for administrative detail and a flare for propaganda. CUSHING displayed an ability for combat, was a fearless leader and knit the organization into a loyal and coordinated fighting unit. Both were inspired by profound hatred for the Japanese. The Cebu area long enjoyed the reputation for having killed more Japanese than any other area. In their efforts to stamp out Japanese and Japanese sympathizers, the men, reportedly under FENTON, went to extremes and many wanton killings of innocent citizens were reported.

The organization of Cebu under this command:

Harry FENTON	CO, Administrative
Lt Col James M. CUSHING	CO, Combat
Lt Col Ricardo ESTRELLA	Chief of Staff
Major Marcial BANATE	Adjutant and G-1
Capt Ramon DURANO	G-2
Lt Col James M. CUSHING	G-3
Capt De LEON	G-4

North Cebu Sector  
North of line Bingay-Sagay  
CO: Lt Col Fabian SANCHEZ

Northwest Cebu Sector  
North of line Liloan-Balamban to North Cebu Sector  
and on western side of the mountains.  
CO: Capt Bernard HALE

Northeast Cebu Sector  
As above but on east side of mountains.  
CO: Lt Col Ricardo T. ESTRELLA

Central Sector  
Between line Liloan-Balamban and line Sibona-Dumanjug.  
CO: Lt Col Olegario H. BAURA

South Cebu Sector  
South of line Sibona-Dumanjug.  
CO: Major Marciano CALDERON (succeeded Lt Col JAKOSALEM  
who was captured in June 1943)

During 1942 and early 1943, the supply problem of Cebu was satisfactory. FENTON insisted no money be printed, that the men volunteer their services; civilians would volunteer supplies. Large caches of food had been established from the cargo of a food ship bound for Corregidor but



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detained because of the Japanese blockade. Civilian contributions further augmented this supply. The large quantities of arms etc., taken to the hills solved the supply problem for some time, and dictated the Cebu inter-island policy. The existence of the stores of food and equipment was generally known, and other commanders who were desirous of improving the situation of their forces, repeatedly sent parties to Cebu to tap this supply. FENTON guarded the stores jealously and when the parties began to arrive, he cut off relations with other island commands categorically. His obstinacy in this respect made trouble later.

About mid-1943, the food situation on Cebu became critical both for the civilians and for the army. The supply and economic problems became more acute, aggravated particularly by a currency shortage.

In March 1943, the Japanese launched a severe anti-guerrilla campaign in reprisal for numerous anti-Japanese acts. Considerable damage was done to the guerrilla organization. CUSHING, suffering from malaria, and FENTON, working under severe nervous strain, both decided to hold activities in abeyance for the time being. Most of their men went home and CUSHING seems to have gone to Negros to recuperate.

The team of CUSHING and FENTON had continued to function successfully and was in public favor until early 1943. Then mounting rumors regarding FENTON's many executions and his private life began to alienate the public from FENTON and to center attention on CUSHING. To some extent both came under public censure in that their many attacks on the Japanese brought reprisals on civilian communities. As FENTON's unpopularity became more widespread, many of his men began to leave since they feared that FENTON's activities would destroy any possibility of GHQ recognizing the Cebu command and furnishing them with supplies. FENTON's refusal to print money and pay the men, further aggravated the situation.

Also, relationships between FENTON and CUSHING began to suffer. CUSHING disagreed with FENTON's policy of isolation and his strict money policy. CUSHING believed that a solution to the currency problem would solve the mid-1943 impasse. He also resented FENTON's growing distrust of Governor ABELLANA who was carrying on some of the pre-war functions of civil government in the province.

Hilario ABELLANA, pre-war governor of Cebu, escaped from the Japanese in July 1943 and joined the Cebu guerrillas. He was popular with the people and his assistance to the guerrillas in carrying on a few civil government functions considerably encouraged the people. Even after the Japanese had replaced him with puppet governor Jose DELGADO, ABELLANA was regarded by most people in Cebu as the real governor. After his escape he assisted the guerrillas in raising funds and looking after the interests of the free civilian communities. He was reported captured in September 1944.

Neither FENTON nor CUSHING believed in reestablishing a free civil government as such in free areas. They held that free civil government was impossible in an area where Japanese attacks were expected at any time.

About April 1943, CUSHING returned to Cebu and undertook the reorganization of the Cebu Command with FENTON. Mr. Roy BELL (since evacuated) visited Cebu at this time to establish liaison for Major J. A. VILLAMOR, then on southern Negros. BELL reported that both leaders were getting along well together, and that neither saw any use for liaison with VILLAMOR. They finally did send a sergeant to VILLAMOR's headquarters. VILLAMOR had been sent to the Philippines from SWPA in January 1943 on an official mission.

FENTON and CUSHING claimed to have about 9,000 men under their command at this time. One third of these were civilian volunteers, and about half the 9,000 were armed. Ammunition was being manufactured in limited

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- 3 -

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amounts in various small towns. Troops near headquarters were reported to be well disciplined, but that discipline of troops in outlying units decreased as the distance from headquarters increased.

Although CUSHING did not doubt FENTON's loyalty, the breach in their viewpoints regarding policy persisted. FENTON was becoming more eccentric, his killings became more wanton, the lack of pay for the men and the constant Japanese raids caused further disaffection, and many men began to leave for other islands. The food situation became critical and the organization was reported to be on the verge of breaking up.

In July 1943, FENTON's wife and child were captured by the Japanese. She and CUSHING's brother, who had been captured on Luzon, were brought to Cebu City to lure CUSHING and FENTON into surrender, but the appeal failed.

Recognizing the need for outside help, CUSHING finally decided in mid-July 1943 to go to Negros and confer with Major VILLAMOR. Badly weakened from malaria and in the face of FENTON's insistence that they appeal to no one for aid, CUSHING departed with a small party including Lt. Col. Olegario BAURA, a trusted assistant. He left verbal instructions with his executive officer, Lt. Col. Ricardo ESTRELLA, to arrest FENTON and hold him until his return should conditions warrant. He also left with ESTRELLA a sealed envelope stating that if he, CUSHING, should be captured or should an equal fate befall FENTON, ESTRELLA should assume command of the unit.

CUSHING did not reach southern Negros until the first of September. He received no help from GHQ and since VILLAMOR was in no position to assist, CUSHING returned to Cebu in October.

Meanwhile, ESTRELLA had taken over the Cebu command with more than the spirit of "acting" commander. On 19 August, he called a conference of the various battalion leaders and convinced them of the necessity for eliminating FENTON, possibly on the charge that FENTON condemned Father Patrick DRUMM, a Cebu missionary, without reason. Spearheaded by the battalions of Capt. Fernard HALE, then Northwest Sector commander, and Major Rogaciano ESPIRITU of the east Cebu battalion, a strong force was sent to capture FENTON and various of his loyal officers. Little opposition was met and FENTON and 14 of his closest assistants were brought back to ESTRELLA's headquarters as prisoners. On 15 September, FENTON was tried, accused of violating several of the Articles of War and summarily executed. Several of FENTON's aides were also executed. ESTRELLA then began a campaign of reorganization which he claimed was for the best interest of CUSHING. Exclusive of the southern Cebu unit which had been dispersed to other islands from overwhelming Jap pressure, ESTRELLA claimed to have about 3,500 men in the new organization.

CUSHING returned from Negros in November 1943 and found ESTRELLA had assumed actual command and that there was some evidence that ESTRELLA had agreed with the Japanese to deliver CUSHING to them for P60,000. CUSHING was also incensed at ESTRELLA's abuse of his authority in dealing with FENTON. ESTRELLA was placed on trial and later executed, but reports indicate that CUSHING possibly had nothing to do with this affair.

In October, a conference was planned in Mindanao for discussion of Cebu provincial problems. The message instructing CUSHING to go to Mindanao reached him after he returned to Cebu. With the state of disorganization that faced him in Cebu, CUSHING did not feel he could leave; he also stated that if the conference involved printing scrip, it was of no interest to him as this type of currency would be dangerous to circulate in Cebu. In the meantime, the P150,000 that ESTRELLA had confiscated from FENTON's treasury had evaporated and Governor ABELLANA's efforts to float a loan in the province were futile. CUSHING sent ABELLANA to the FERTIG conference, however, and reportedly ABELLANA was able to secure a small sum of Mindanao currency.

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- 4 -

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III. THE CUSHING UNIT AND THE CEBU AREA COMMAND:

Throughout December and early January 1944, CUSHING worked on the rebuilding of his unit. The Japanese attacked heavily again in January 1944 and nearly captured the headquarters and destroyed the entire organization. CUSHING was recognized CO of the Cebu Area Command as a measure to bolster the morale of the forces.

Shortly after his recognition, supplies were sent CUSHING and he established direct radio contact with GHQ in March. By April 1944, the forces had been reorganized, an effective intelligence net was in operation, and an increasing volume of important intelligence was being sent with the establishment of direct radio contact. His staff is believed to be as follows:

Commanding Officer	Lt Col James CUSHING
Executive Officer	Major Olegario BAURA
Adjutant and G-1	Major Manuel F. SEGURA
G-2	Lt Col Fabian M. SANCHEZ (Maj Jesus R. YEANEZ ?)
G-3	Major Fernando VILLAMOR, PMA graduate
G-4	Major Agaton MEDINA

CUSHING had revamped his organization from some eight battalions into four regiments, the 85th, 86th, 87th, and 88th. The command area of these units are shown on Enclosure I. Regimental Commanders are as follows:

		Apr 44 strength (Officers and Men)
85th Infantry Regt.	Major Rogaciano ESPIRITU	1510
86th Infantry Regt.	Major Maximo ALBENDA	1529
87th Infantry Regt.	Major Abel F. TRAZO	1097
88th Infantry Regt.	Major Bernard HALE	1032
Hq Company Service	Capt Alipio MARGARIOLA(?)	<u>519</u>
Troops Inf. Div.		5687

Their weapons at this time were some 2700 assorted pieces including 14 MGs, 6 mortars, and 33 auto-rifles. They also maintained a few ordnance shops for manufacturing small amounts of ammunition and making repairs. CUSHING maintained strict discipline and most of his officers had the respect and liking of their men. As instructions from GHQ emphasized intelligence rather than offensive effort, the general policy during this period was to "lie low".

By June 1944, CUSHING claimed to have approximately 25,000 volunteer guards available in Cebu of which half were able-bodied men fit for military service. A good part of these CUSHING asserted, were in training. Probably because of the revived guerrilla program the Japanese again initiated punitive expeditions in force during August and succeeded in breaking up much of their activity. However, on several occasions, CUSHING managed to strike back inflicting heavy casualties on the Japanese.

By the end of October, the Japanese had evacuated southern Cebu and CUSHING was operating unmolested south of the Carcar-Pinamungajan line. He also has units in Medellin, Bantayan and Camotes Islands. On 2 November, he received additional supplies from GHQ and was again engaging the Japanese in central Cebu. The strength was last reported to be 7955 officers and men, with over 3000 assorted weapons.

CUSHING has several times requested he be given command of Bohol. Bohol and Cebu are both part of the 8th Military District but the commands were recognized separately since there was no apparent connection between the guerrilla organizations on the two islands. FERTIG on Mindanao has sent supplies to Cebu through Bohol, possibly with some interference on Bohol.



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In addition both FERTIG and CUSHING claim that Bohol has harbored Japanese agents without apparent effort to control them. Whether this is true or not has not been proven. Other island commanders, FERTIG on Mindanao, ABCEDE on Negros and PERALTA on Panay, have kept agents on Bohol. CUSHING no doubt resents this and has often wished to control these agents. No action has been taken on CUSHING's ambitions.

The accomplishments of the Cebu Area Command are considerable. Cebu is the most densely populated island in the Philippines. Cebu has served as the most important Japanese base south of Manila. In spite of this fact, FENTON and CUSHING kept alive one of the most active and successful of the known guerrilla organizations. The command has been maintained in spite of numerous enemy reprisal terror raids, lack of supplies and absence of GHQ recognition until early 1944. CUSHING's achievements and the loyalty he has inspired in his people in the face of numerous difficulties are remarkable.

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20 AUG 75





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IV. INDEX AND LIST OF PERSONALITIES

		<u>Page</u>
ABCEDE, Bvt Lt Col Salvador	CO, 7th ID, backed CUSHING for Cebu Area Commander.	6
ABELLANA, Gov Hilario	Pre-war governor of Cebu, puppet governor until January 1943; loyal, worked for CUSHING until captured in September 1944.	3,4
ABILA, Lt	ANDREWS officer who visited FENTON-CUSHING in May 1943.	
ACANTILADOR, Bvt Capt Dominador	Battalion CO, 86th Inf Regt.	
ALBENDA, Bvt Maj Maximo	CO, 86th Inf Regt; reported very able and one of the best military men on island; was 2nd Lt USAFFE.	5
ALFAFARA, Bvt Maj Catalino	Former Capt, PA. CUSHING Bn CO in south Cebu.	
ANDREWS, Maj Edwin	Tool VILLAMOR's place on Negros in October 1943.	
ARMILLA, Bvt Capt	CUSHING regimental officer.	
BALTAZAR, Bvt Maj Alejandro	Former medical officer for FENTON; believed still with CUSHING.	
BANATE, Bvt Maj Marcial	Reported Adjutant of dual FENTON-CUSHING unit in June 1943. May have been executed.	2
BAURA, Bvt Lt Col Olegario	Present C of S to CUSHING. Maj J. A. VILLAMOR says "not very bright but plenty of guts"; was 1st Lt, USAFFE.	2,4,5
BELL, Mr or Bvt Maj Roy	Visited FENTON-CUSHING in March 1943 as representative of Maj J. A. VILLAMOR. Important figure in south Negros Guerrilla movement.	3
CALDERON, Bvt Capt Marciola	CUSHING regimental officer in south Cebu; formerly 1st Lt, USAFFE; successor to and brother-in-law of JAKOSALEM.	2
CASTILLO, Bvt Maj Jose	Medical Officer with CUSHING.	
CHYNOWETH, General	USA, USAFFE Commander at Cebu, captured. Purportedly commissioned FENTON and ordered him, ABELLANA and EDMONDS (?) not to surrender due to their anti-Japanese activities.	1
CUSHING, Bvt Maj Charles	Brother of James. Former Luzon guerrilla; captured by Japs in June 1943. Wrote public appeal to James to surrender.	4
CUSHING, Bvt Lt Col James	CO Cebu Area Command. See text.	1,2,3,4,5,6
CUNANAN, Capt Hugo (?)	Reportedly left FENTON in mid-1943 to organize unit on Siquijor Island. Attempted to lure CUSHING men to his organization.	
DELGADO, Jose	Puppet governor Cebu from February 1943.	3
DRUMM, Father Patrick	Catholic priest, Cebu City, executed by FENTON.	
DURANO, Bvt Capt Ramon	FENTON's assistant G-2; believed executed September 1943 with FENTON.	2,4
ESPIRITU, Bvt Maj Rogaciano	CO 85th Inf Regt; fearless fighter and much liked by his men. 29 years old; formerly 3rd Lt PA.	4,5
ESPLANADA, Capt	Signal officer in a CUSHING regiment.	

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20 AUG. 75



ESTRELLA, Lt Col Ricardo	Commanded East Cebu Sector and later was C of S to FENTON-CUSHING Command; had FENTON executed during absence of CUSHING; later killed. Saw action on Mindanao as a captain.	2,4
FEINSTEIN, Aaron	Real name of Harry FENTON.	
FENTON, Betty	Filipina wife of Harry FENTON; captured by Japs in June 1943 and wrote public appeal to him to surrender.	
FENTON, Bvt Lt Col Harry	Early dual commander with CUSHING; executed by ESTRELLA during CUSHING's absence.	1,2,3,4,6
FERTIG, Lt Col Wendell	CO, 10th MD; has attempted to have Cebu put under his command.	5,6
GADOR, Bvt Lt Col Gabriel	Reported erratic Negros leader; attempted to hinder CUSHING's activities.	
GALANG, Capt	Probably former CUSHING officer.	
GARCIA, Senator	Pre-war Senator from Bohol; CUSHING radioed in July 1944 that his timely arrival upset plot to kill INGINIERO.	
GARCIA, Bvt Capt Santiago	CUSHING regimental officer.	
GULLAS, Paullino	Puppet commissioner of Visayas.	
HABACAN, Bvt Capt Eusebio	Officer courier to Mindanao for CUSHING.	
HALE, Bvt Maj Bernard	CO, 88th Inf Regiment; American mestizo about 29 years old. Good leader and well liked.	2,5
INGINIERO, Bvt Maj Ismael	Bohol leader; reported to have attempted to oust CUSHING's command of Cebu. CUSHING also tried to obtain command of Bohol.	
JAKOSALEM, Bvt Lt Col Luis	Former CO of South Cebu under CUSHING. Captured by Japs in May 1943 and induced into making pro-Jap appeals.	
JENOZA, Bvt Capt	Negros guerrilla who attempted to hinder CUSHING from reaching VILLAMOR in August 1943.	
JIMENEZ, Capt	CUSHING finance officer.	
LEON, Capt de	G-4 Combined FENTON-CUSHING command.	2
LUNA, Bvt Maj Manuel	Medical officer with CUSHING.	
MAHINAY, Bvt Maj Ruperto	Former CO of Northeast Cebu Sector.	
MANUBAG, Bvt Maj Primo	Former master sergeant, PA. Commanded Northwest Cebu Sector under combined Cebu command, later replaced by HALE.	
MAR, Bvt Capt Quirico Del	Former Judge Advocate with CUSHING.	
MARGARIOLA, Bvt Capt Alipio	CO, Hq battalion, CUSHING unit; was sergeant in Philippine Scouts.	5
MEDINA, Bvt Maj Agaton	G-4, CUSHING unit; former 1st Lt, USAFFE; commanded North Cebu Sector under combined command; well liked by men and civilians.	5
MORUGAN, Bvt Capt Jose	Former CO Northern Cebu Sector.	
MORGAN, Bvt Maj L. P.	Former FERTIG officer sent by him to Visayas on mission.	

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NAVALTA, Lt	CUSHING regimental signal officer.	
ORCILLO, Bvt Capt Victorino	Former 3rd Lt PA (?). CUSHING battalion CO.	
OSIENA, Lt Col Emilio	CUSHING ordered ESPIRITU to attempt to locate; killed by FENTON men in 1943.	
FERALTA, Col Macario	CO, 6th MD.	6
PONCE, Capt	CUSHING regimental officer.	
RECIO, Capt	Medical officer with CUSHING.	
REYES, Lt	FERTIG officer who met with Capt GARCIA of CUSHING unit in regard to Cebu situation in June 1943.	
SALAZAR, Bvt Maj Jose	Former Signal Officer for CUSHING.	
SANCHEZ, Bvt Lt Col Fabian	Former Civil Affairs Officer for CUSHING, now G-2 (?). Formerly 1st Lt, USAFFE; commanded North- east Cebu Sector under combined command; saw action on Mindanao as a captain.	2,5
SAVALLON, Lt	CUSHING regimental officer.	
SEGURA, Bvt Maj Manuel	Adjutant for CUSHING; was 2nd Lt, USAFFE.	5
TRAZO, Bvt Maj Abel	CO, 87th Inf Regt. Reportedly very able; veteran of Corregidor; surrendered but escaped.	5
TRINIDAD, Bvt Capt Paterno	S-2 Southern Cebu Sector.	
VARDELAS, Bvt Capt	S-3. Former PG officer. Reputedly capable.	
VILLAMOR, Bvt Maj Fernando	Present G-3 for CUSHING. PMA graduate; reported good fighter.	5
VILLAMOR, Maj Jesus A.	Sent on intelligence mission by GHQ in December 1942.	3,4
YBANEZ, Bvt Maj Jesus	Formerly G-2 for CUSHING. Bataan veteran, escaped after joining the EC at Cebu; capable man.	5
ZAMORA, Juan C.	Puppet mayor of Cebu City.	

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