

EVACUEE REPORTS:

GENTRY, ROBERT E.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS  
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA  
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION GENERAL STAFF

APD 500  
21 August 1944



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20 AUG. 75

Philippine Evacuee Report #196

SUBJECT : MINDANAO

From : Robert Everett GENTRY, 1st Lt, ASN 0-888840.

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Name : Robert Everett Gentry.  
Born : In Wenatchee, Washington.  
Service : Enlisted 9 October 1939, assigned to the Medical Corps; was a staff sergeant when commissioned a 2d Lieutenant in Medical Administrative Corps on 17 April 1942 by General Chynoweth; served with guerrillas on Mindanao from 1942 to 1944.  
In P.I. : Since 20 May 1940.

Interrogated by G-2, GHQ SWPA

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Gentry, apparently, was active in helping the guerrillas on Mindanao, as evidenced by the promotion he received. The information submitted by him is considered reliable.

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CHRONOLOGY

- 20 May 40 - Arrived in Philippine Islands as a private in the Medical Corps.
- 8 Dec 41 - Stationed on Corregidor.
- 2 Feb 42 - Transferred to Army Transport Service as S/Sgt.
- 1 Mar 42 - Was on the USAT 'DON ESTEBAN' when she was bombed and sunk in Palauan Bay, Mindoro.
- 5 Mar 42 - Arrived in Cebu City and assigned to Cebu Advance Quartermaster Depot.
- 11 Apr 42 - Retreated to General CHYNOWETH'S Command Post in the hills when the Japanese invaded Cebu.
- 17 Apr 42 - Commissioned a 2d Lieutenant in Medical Administrative Corps by General Chynoweth.
- Jun 42 - Went to Surigao by banca via Leyte.
- Jun - Oct 42 - Lived in evacuation in Mindanao.
- Oct 42 - Joined Col FERTIG'S organization.
- Oct 42 - Mar 44 - Served with the guerrillas on Mindanao, making several trips for Col Fertig.
- 29 Feb 44 - Promoted to 1st Lieutenant and transferred to the Infantry.
- Mar 44 - Evacuated to Australia.

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Japanese in Misamis In December, 1943, there were 600 to 800 Japanese soldiers in Misamis training in combat landing operations. Part of these came from Iligan. The composition of the group changed periodically. At all times there were parts of garrisons from several places training there rather than a single unit.

Members of the Bureau of Constabulary were also in training there.

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In December, 1943, some Jap troops from the Misamis garrison raided the Liangan area. Their purpose was not to take food since this area is not productive. Evidently their intention was to wreck the guerrilla headquarters near Liangan and destroy the supplies.

After the Liangan raid, Col BOWLER moved his headquarters to Baroy. Evidently the Japanese knew this because they raided Baroy in January 1944. Z4V, the Naval radio station hidden at Lala, was not captured at that time. The Japanese stumbled on to the Farm Project, but Gentry believed that they did not know what was there because the patrols did not remain in the area long. The Project was well camouflaged in gardens.

Guerrilla Organization The intelligence service is improving constantly, but the men are not trained in this line. Fertig's agents have been picked for their intelligence, reliability, and education. They have been given the best instruction possible, but they do not know the meaning of the term 'Military Intelligence' in its broader sense. Every effort should be made to supply them with G-2 manuals.

An American G-2 Officer who knows the Philippine Islands and the customs of the people should be sent there as an instructor, or one of the evacuees should be returned after he has been given a short course on Military Intelligence.

TRANSPORTATION : Launches are not available except on the Agusan River. All traveling is done by native boat. There are many trucks hidden in the forest in Lanao and Agusan which can be repaired. Though alcohol is produced, there is not enough to operate many trucks. The 108th Division operates two trucks, and a short railroad from the coast for a distance of 15 kilometers into the interior to the Command Post and radio station. The 110th Division operates three or four trucks as well as four launches on the Agusan River. The roads are in fair condition but many bridges are gone, some of which have been replaced with temporary structures.

COMMUNICATIONS : Radio is the main system of communication. The 108th and 110th Divisions have telegraph and telephone service all along the coast of their Headquarters. Numerous "walkie-talkie" radios should be sent to Mindanao so that each regimental commander would always be in contact with his Headquarters.

FOOD : In some areas the food situation is much better than in others. Some units, particularly the 108th and 110th Divisions, raise chickens, vegetables and pigs for their own use. Every effort is being made to increase production. There is little food in Lanao. Even in peace time this province had to import its food. In Agusan and Surigao the food situation is only fair. In Misamis Occidental and Zamboanga food conditions are good.

Supply Requirements The supplies being shipped from Australia have been almost perfect in both quantity and kinds.

For current use, heavy weapons, including 37mm guns, should not be sent as they are not mobile enough. Air cooled, .30 calibre light machine guns, automatic rifles, "tommy" guns, and carbines are the chief weapons needed.

Anti-tank mines are needed to stop the use of the Dansalan-Iligan road and other roads which are used to supply the interior garrisons of Dansal and Ganassi. This might cause the Japs to abandon these garrisons as they are at present afraid of the Moros and never leave the garrisons except by truck convoys on the road to Iligan.

The medicine sent to Mindanao has been alright except that there should be larger supplies of malaria and dysentary medicines. Sabotage equipment with complete instructions should be sent.



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With proper handling a good sabotage system can be organized in using Filipinos who can enter Japanese occupied territory to set fire to copra, hemp and rice bodegas and lumber stores.

**AMERICAN PERSONNEL** : Discontent is growing among the Americans because they are getting no credit or recognition for the valuable work they are doing. Many are wanting to leave. Though they are doing the work of officers they are still privates and corporals. The morale and services of these men would be better if they were promoted or if their commissions were confirmed. Although all of the men now on Mindanao have been on active duty with the guerrillas since the middle of 1942, they have not been promoted since 7 December 1941. This is not conducive to high morale.

**W W FERTIG** : Colonel and CO of the 10th Military District. In addition to bringing all of the guerrillas into one organization, which is beginning to function in a commendable manner, Col Fertig has also been responsible for the re-establishment of the civil government.

**HEDGES** ✓ : Lt Col with the guerrillas on Mindanao. He was formerly with the Kilambugan Lumber Mill. Because of this connection and the reputation he made while there, he had a certain amount of authority over the people, especially the Moros. He was the first American to join Col Fertig.

**BOWLER** ✓ : Lt Col on Mindanao. He is a good soldier and is respected by the people.

**JESUS MONTALVAN** ✓ : District G-2 officer for Col Fertig.

**ANTONIO MONTALVAN** ✓ : A G-2 agent operating in Manila. He is the brother of Jesus Montalvan.

**P AGUAN** ✓ : A Moro Captain acting as Moro Liaison Officer. He is loyal, well educated, and had been active in civil affairs before the war.

**YVANOF** ✓ : He is one of two or three Russians who came to the Philippine Islands about 1921, supposedly after some revolution. He has only one eye and loves to blow things up with dynamite. He is now in the guerrilla army, stationed at a coast watcher station.

**LAURETA** ✓ : He has an intelligence organization in the Davao area. Though at first he was not cooperative with Col Fertig, he is now getting his supplies from Fertig and has a radio at his disposal.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT** : Through the untiring efforts of Colonel Fertig, the civilian government is functioning. Except those who were discharged for helping the Japanese, former employees are utilized in their old positions. The Food and Supply Administration has been helpful in alleviating the food situation by buying food in those areas where it is plentiful and selling it at cost in those areas where there is a shortage.

Moro Problems in Lanao Between May and September of 1942 the activities of the Moros were characterized by killing and robbing retreating soldiers so as to obtain rifles and ammunition. By organizing the Moros into a militia these terroristic actions were stopped except along the south coast of Lanao.

The Moros are divided into pro-American, pro-Jap, and pro-Moro groups. The majority is pro-American. When the invasion takes place all of them will jump to the side of the Americans.

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In the opinion of many Moros, one of the most difficult problems confronting the Americans will be the disarming of the Moros. Upon the reoccupation of the Philippines there should be on hand American officers who have served with Moros and have learned their customs to handle the job of disarming and pacifying them. If this is not done, there will be a great loss of life to our soldiers and the Moros because of the careless moves of inexperienced officers in trying to do by force what diplomacy would better accomplish.

Attitude of Moros to Independence

The Moro population absolutely does not want the independence promised by the United States. The granting of same will result in a continual race warfare between Moros and Filipino Christians for years to come.

The Moros will refuse to be governed by Christians in event of independence. This attitude is the result of exploitation of the Moros by Christian minor government officials and constabulary commanders in the past. An unprejudiced investigation would reveal that the Moros have justifiable grounds for their attitude.

Some Moros have already sworn on their sacred Koran that they will accept no rule of Moro provinces by a Christian Government except that of the United States which they respect and will gladly accept.

DATU ALI ✓: A pro-Jap Moro. He and his men killed COX and DUDLEY, American Air Corps men, in October 1943.

MINALAO ✓: He is well educated and one of the most trustworthy of all Moros.

BAGUINDAALI ✓: He is well educated and trustworthy Moro.

BUSRAN KALAW ✓: He is a Moro suspected of playing ball with the Japanese.

BOLT ✓: An American who was helping the guerrillas in Baroy, Lanao area in the summer of 1942.

NEWMAN ✓: An old American pensionado who was living in the Baroy, Lanao area in 1942.

AUSTIN ✓: He is an Englishman, formerly with the Finley-Miller Timber Company at Kolumbugen. He was living in the Baroy area in 1942.

FATHER THIBAUT ✓: He was living in the Baroy area in 1942.

FATHER McKEANEY ✓: He was living in the Baroy area in 1942.

MRS PETERS ✓: She is from Leyte. She had a bad reputation but Gentry could verify none of the charges of forgery and duplicity which the guerrillas had accused her of. She was in a small barrio not far from Fertig's headquarters. Fertig kept a close watch on her and kept her in a barrio that was remot enough that she had no contact with the Americans or what was going on in Headquarters. She told Gentry that she was being well looked after.

PETER SCHUR ✓: A Pfc who was on the 'DON ESTEBAN'. He is presently at Dipolog with the guerrillas.

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