



First Congress of the Philippines)
Special Session)

(N.R. No. 25)

(RESOLUTION No. 11)

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND GRATITUDE OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE TO
MAJOR EDWIN P. RAMSEY.

Whereas, Major Edwin P. Ramsey, during the three years of Japanese oppression in the Philippines, demonstrated exceptional leadership and undaunted courage in the organization of guerrilla units in the City of Manila and in the provinces of Bulacan, Tarlac, Bataan, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan and has rendered invaluable service which undoubtedly accelerated the liberation of the Philippines.

Whereas, through his farsighted leadership, he was able to coordinate all the units in the resistance movement, keeping alive continuous resistance against our oppressors; and

Whereas the Filipino people owe him deep gratitude for his services which accelerated the liberation of the best organized and controlled area occupied by the ruthless enemy, thereby saving thousands of lives and property that otherwise would have been sacrificed: Now, therefore,
be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives express, as it hereby expresses, the profound gratitude of the Filipino people to Major Edwin P. Ramsey for his invaluable services to Philippine liberation.

Adopted, July 13, 1945.

Thank you.

/ding

Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 14

A brief note about the Mountain Corps Reg't. and the General Service Troops Regiment. While each of the Districts maintained a limited number of mobile well-trained and fully armed units in the field, most of the units were organized in the areas from where they came. In effect, farmers by day and guerrillas by night.

Aside from the Districts' forces, ECLGA maintained these two regiments well-trained, fully armed and combat ready at all times. The Mountain Corps Regiment of LCL Manahan operated in the San Mateo, Montalban, Macabod and Novaliches areas acting as outpost security for my headquarters on Mt. Balagbag.

The General Service Troops of LCL Briones were maintained in the area of Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija and until the US forces landed in Lingayen were used mostly as a counter force to the HUKS. While Briones was responsible to my headquarters, he cooperated with and operated mostly in support of Col. de Dios in Pampanga.

I would like to add one closing note. As I said, over the last thirty eight years very little comprehensive research has been done on ECLGA, if at all, and that which has been written about it has been not only incomplete but in many cases inaccurate. Time tends to blur history with an oftentimes subjective haze, when it should always be objective. For this reason I am going to read a resolution of the First Congress of the Philippines, adopted in July of 1945 and sent to me while in a hospital in the United States. I think this puts back into perspective the esteem in which the country once held ECLGA when all was fresh in their minds. For, obviously, I would have been nothing without ECLGA.



Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 13

By mid-1944, Col. Alberto had set up his operations in the area of Baliuag and the southern sections of Bulacan. While it was organized as BMD, it only attained the strength of one regiment under the command of LCL Jose de la Rosa. Due to lack of time for preparation of this paper, I do not have the rest of the organization structure of BMD available on time to include it herein.

GHQ - ECLGA

While in Manila at Christmas time I had learned that a coast watcher intelligence unit of the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) had landed in Mindoro and was in contact with Major Ramon Ruffy, the senior guerrilla officer in Mindoro. In late February I moved my headquarters to Macabod, above San Mateo, and prepared for a trip to Mindoro. I took three officers and eight men and went by boat from Obando to Cavite, walked across Cavite/Batangas with the help of local guerrillas, then by Batil to Bongabong in Mindoro. When we arrived I learned that Phillips has been ambushed near Abra de Ilog. I went back and exhumed the body to make sure it was him and sent his dentures to Australia with a Sgt. Wise who was going out by sub. I then returned to Luzon landing at San Luis, Batangas on May 7th. By about the 15th of May I was back at my headquarters near San Mateo.

Fortunately, Gen. Baba, Chief of CIC, had learned of my trip to Mindoro and personally followed me there. All the information he could get indicated I had gone on to Australia. So after my return the pressure was off for about three months.

After I returned around May 15th we built a substantial and defensible camp on Mt. Balagbag, above the Novaliches watershed area and North of Montalban. By that time we had built a fairly good radio and I had a good radio man to run it. He was Capt. Marcos Contreras who had been a maritime radio operator and whose radio signature was so strong that GHQ SWPA could recognize it. Also about this time, I received a visitor from Major Jesus Villamor who brought me an AIB Transceiver with the latest codes. That was Capt. Modesto Castañeda who used the alias "Capt. Casey", who had initially contacted me in Polo before going back for the radio. He was a signal officer who joined Col. Abcede after the surrender in the Visayas and was assigned by Abcede to Villamor when he arrived. He recently told me that ECLGA had provided MacArthur with more relevant information than all of the AIB Intelligence units in Luzon put together.

While GHQ-ECLGA had several serious losses, as mentioned earlier, by this time the GHQ organization was solid. It was as follows:

- C.O. - Maj. Edwin P. Ramsey
- C. of S. - Col. Amado Bautista
- G-1 - Col. Antonio Chance
- G-2 - Col. Obie Boncan
- G-3 - Col. Luis Villercal
- G-4 - Col. Augusto Gonzalez
- Chief Surgeon - Maj. Vicente Campa
- Chief Chaplain - Maj. Pablo Carasig; SJ
- Hdq & Hdq Serv. Co. - Capt. James W. Carrington
- Mountain Corps Regiment - Col. Eduardo Manahan
- General Service Troops Regiment - Col. Pacifico Triones

Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 12

31st Inf. Regiment - LCL Capobres
41st Inf. Regiment - LCL Romulo Briones
51st Inf. Regiment - LCL Villaruel
61st Inf. Regiment - LCL Benjamin Aquino
71st Inf. Regiment - LCL Nicanor Adonis

MMD "VERSOL" Special Intelligence and Sabotage - Capt. Martin Ramos
Special Intelligence Units - Capt. Andy Vizcarra & Capt. Apolonio Garcia

Col. Pat Gatson was captured in late September of 1943 and held in the Kempetai station at the airport studio at the corner of Ascarraga and Dagupan streets until attempted liberation raids caused the removal of all prisoners to Fort Santiago. Pat never came out of Fort Santiago. Meanwhile, I assigned Col. Jorge Sanchez as C.O. MMD on October 1st, 1943. The staff and command remained essentially the same until liberation except for Obie Bonoan being promoted to G-2 GHQ, ECLGA in 1944 and some losses to the Japanese.

After arriving in Polo on November 24th, 1943, I arranged with Col. Sanchez, alias Aurelio Santos, and my staff, to go into Manila for Christmas and New Year. Carrying a Swiss Passport with my picture on it, I entered Manila by car on December 20th '43 and was housed at the home of LCL Narciso Mabanta and Major Pedro Mabanta in New Manila. I had come to Manila for two reasons. One was to see Gen. Lim and the other was for rest and recreation (R&R). Gen. Lim was out of town in Batangas at the time so I never got to meet him. I did have a good R & R until Dec. 29th when Capt. Ramona Snyder, one of our intelligence officers I mentioned earlier, arrived at the house with a message from Gen. Manuel Roxas who had been in contact with me and sending information and finances since he got out of prison. Gen. Francisco, the chief of the puppet constabulary warned Roxas that Gen. Baba, the Chief of Japanese Counter-Intelligence knew that I was in Manila and specifically in the area of New Manila but not the address. It was because of this information that I was uncovered the fact that Franco Viray Reyes, posing as an agent for Chick Parsons, was a spy for the Japanese. There is no time here for that story but Mona Synder got a calesa and we moved across Manila to the Manila Gas Compound house of LCL Walter Roeder, the Swiss, whose passport I was using. He was incidentally my Chief of Chemical Warfare. He made some very effective sabotage machines for us, more reliable than the ones we later got from Australia by submarine. Meanwhile, the Gas Compound was the bivouac for a detachment of 300 Japanese. I stayed there until Jan. 9th '44 when I returned to my headquarters at Polo.

BULACAN MILITARY DISTRICT (BMD)

As indicated earlier, ECLGA units in Bulacan had been under the command of Col. Alejo Santos until early 1944. Sometime around May 1944, after my headquarters had been moved to Mt. Balaybag, east of the Novaliches reservoir area and north of Montalban, I received a letter from Alejo Santos. Because Capt. Bernard Anderson had been trying to assert control over Santos after the capture of Barker, and because I was head of ECLGA, he did not want to be in the middle so he was withdrawing from ECLGA and would operate independently as EMA. I wrote him back immediately assuring him I understood and accepting his decision. From that time on there was never any problem between our units even though I re-established our activities in Bulacan as the Bulacan Military District (BMD) under Col. Fausto Alberto.



Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 11

One last unit of the PTMD should be mentioned. It was the General Service Troops of the Hq. PTMD. This unit was led by Capt. Palaruan who was one of the toughest combat commanders in Pangasinan. After he was wounded and captured, he still refused to sign a surrender paper and was allowed to die. He was succeeded by the executive officer, Capt. Arturo Catchila, who led this unit with great distinction through liberation.

As a footnote to the gallant men of PTMD: They not only fought with great distinction alongside the liberating troops of Gen. MacArthur throughout Central Luzon, many of them also fought in Balete Pass, Villa-verde Trail, Kabayan Plateau, and in Nueva Viscaya and Mt. Province.

By late November of '43, Pangasinan and Tarlac were well organized with a command structure that could continue without my presence. By this time Manila was in need of attention and I received a message from Brig. Gen. Vicente Lim, who had been released from prison, asking for a meeting. Due to his being under continuing suspicion he couldn't risk leaving Manila.

MANILA MILITARY DISTRICT (MMD)

For the foregoing reasons I decided to leave for Manila. Because of the distance, as well as time and effort required to walk to Manila, I had Major Camacho hire a box car from the MRR. After arranging for officers of the MMD to meet the box car in Polo, Bulacan, I boarded the car on the night of November 24, 1943 with two men, Sgt. C. Cornel and Sgt. Cadizon with one 30 calibre machine gun and two tommy guns. We placed Nipa shingles in front of the doors, as if it were a cargo of Nipa, and had the door padlocked from the outside. Camacho was stationed on the front of the train with a pocket full of Japanese war notes for greasing any squeaky wheels. Time doesn't permit recounting the harrowing details of the trip but we finally made it to Polo about midnight where we were met by Col. Jorge Sanchez, then commanding officer of MMD. Upon arrival, my headquarters was established at P.O. Bagbag, Polo, Bulacan.

As mentioned earlier, Alejandro Santos and Fausto Alberto had been sent to Manila in June of 1942. They were later assigned as the first C.O. and C of S, respectively, of the Manila District by Capt. Barker. The units organized by them were designated sector squadrons, Manila District. After the capture of Santos in early January of '43, another officer recruited by him succeeded to the command before the capture of Barker. This was Patricio Gonzalez, alias Col. Pat. Gatson while Alberto reverted to intelligence activities for my headquarters. By mid-1943 I directed the reorganization of the Manila District into the Manila Military following a generally military structure. From that time on there was a fairly stable MMD organization even though we lost a number of the senior officers, including Col. Pat Gatson.

When the organization of MMD took effect, the structure was as follows:

- C.O. - Col. Patricio Gonzalez (Pat Gatson)
- C. of S. - Col. Wistrimunde Gregorio
- Ins. Gen. - Col. Augusto Buenventura
- G-1 - Col. Eduardo Bahia
- G-2 - Col. Obie Bonoan
- G-3 - Col. Berja
- G-4 -

- 1st Inf. Regiment - LCL Blancaflor
- 11th Inf. Regiment - LCL Alfredo Memije
- 21st Inf. Regiment - LCL Capobres

May 23rd was the birthday of Bob Lapham. Since there were very meagre rations available we sent a messenger to Manila to Ramona Snyder, a Filipina married to an American prisoner in Cabanatuan. Mona was one of that brave band of girls, along with Raymunda Guidote and many others, who had been smuggling food and medicines into the concentration camps at Cabanatuan and to the guerrillas. She had been contacted a year before to help Bob when he was very sick and had nursed him back to health. Afterwards she continued helping him with medicines, money and intelligence information. Mona brought some goodies from Manila and we celebrated Bob's 25th, I believe it was, birthday in Nalsian. Mona later became one of my most valuable intelligence operatives, but more about that later when I talk about the Manila Military District.

Major Lapham, upon joining me, had been designated as Inspector General of ECLGA with the added responsibility for overseeing all units in Pangasinan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija. He stayed with me until late July of '43 while we completed organization of the 1st Provisional Regiment of Pangasinan. This unit was under Capt. Claro Camacho and later under Maj. Antonio Jimenez when Claro was promoted and assigned to GHQ, ECLGA. This Regiment, later to become the 1st Pangasinan Regiment, PTMD, included the towns of Bayombong, Bautista, Alcala and Sto. Tomas. In late June, Lapham and I proceeded by boat on the Agno river to Labrador, Pangasinan. Here we inducted units which were designated the 3rd Provisional Regiment of Pangasinan (commanded by Lieut. Col. Rizalino Llamas). This unit included the towns of Labrador, Sual and Lingayen. It was in Labrador where we first met Capt. Charles U. Putnam, another mining engineer with an artillery commission who had been cut off during the Japanese invasion of Lingayen Gulf. He had been helping to organize the units in the area of Labrador. He was accompanied by a Lieut. Thomas Dagget. We brought Putnam and Dagget back to Bayombong with us and later assigned Putnam as the commanding officer of the PTMD.

After returning to Bayombong from Labrador, we received confirmed intelligence of the capture of Maj. Ralph Praeger and Capt. Thomas Jones, both of the 26th Cavalry. They were seen and spoken to in Nueva Ecija while prisoners of the Japanese. Praeger, who was C.O. of the North Luzon Guerrilla Area under Thorpe was later executed while Jones lived through the war as a prisoner and is one of the few 26th Cavalry officers still alive. So because of these developments, Lapham felt he should get back to his organizations in Nueva Ecija so we parted a few days later. Bob continued organizing and operating in Eastern Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija with great effectiveness. However, after I proceeded to Manila on Nov. 24, 1943 I lost contact with him. During 1944 I was very busy in the Manila area, including one trip to Mindoro in February, and Bob had been moving frequently, including trips to Baler, so I never saw him again until liberation. Major Lapham was another officer whose courage and conduct were exemplary and he became a legendary figure as head of "Lapham's Guerrillas."

Meanwhile, after Lapham left I proceeded to San Carlos and organized the 2nd Provisional Regiment under Col. (Judge) Juan A. Benitez. This unit covered the towns of San Carlos, Malastqui, Calasiao and Dagupan. The headquarters of the PTMD was established in San Carlos with Col. Benitez concurrently as executive officer. After the capture of Capt. Putnam in a barrio of Aguilar, and his later execution, I promoted Johnny Benitez to his position. He served in this position with great distinction through the liberation and lived to serve his country in several important government positions after the war. When he was promoted as commanding officer of PTMD, LCL Felipe Villanueva became the regimental commander of the 2nd Pangasinan Regiment.

Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 9

PANGASINAN-TARLAC MILITARY DISTRICT (PTMD) ✓

In light of the dangerous situation in Manila in early March of 1943, I changed my plan and proceeded to Tarlac. On the trip north from Bataan I was accompanied only by Sgt. Proceso Cadizon and we were met in Porac by Claro Camacho, whom I had sent some time before to reconnoiter and make contacts in Tarlac and Pangasinan. Claro had been a Sgt. in the 24th FA Regiment (PS), who had escaped from Bataan and joined us at Bo. Timbo. His hometown was Bayombong, Pangasinan where we finally established our base of operations for organizing Tarlac, Pangasinan and parts of Nueva Ecija over the next few months until November 24, 1943. Claro was commissioned as a Capt. in ECLGA and later promoted to major after organizing the 1st Pangasinan Regiment. Later still he was transferred to GHQ where he became the Chief Signal Officer during the liberation period.

After leaving Porac, the three of us passed directly through Fort Stotsenberg, then being used as a Japanese base. In fact we slept overnight and spent one full day in Bo. Sapang Bato, which as many of you know is within the base where many of the Scouts families lived. The following night we crossed the Japanese airfield and proceeded cross country through Mabalacat and Bamban, then along the railroad to Capas and Tarlac. After skirting the town of Tarlac we again followed the railroad to Paniqui where we arrived March 16th and were met by some of the troops that were to become the 1st Tarlac Regiment - PTMD, under Capt. Herminigildo Reyes. This unit also included Moncada, Gerona and Anao as well as Nampicuan in Nueva Ecija. After the death of Capt. Reyes this unit was taken over by Lt. (later Col. Jose Maristela.

While spending the next four weeks organizing in that area I had gotten a message to Lieut. Robert Lapham who had been organizing in Nueva Ecija. He joined me in Anao, Tarlac on April 20th, '43. It was at this time I learned from Bob that we had both been promoted to major by Gen. MacArthur as a result of a radio message sent by Thorpe to GHQ recommending a two grade promotion for all of those who joined him in organizing the guerrilla forces. Bob had received the confirmation message from Maj. Walter Cushing who still had a radio in the north, before his capture. Walter was another one of those true heroes of the resistance movement who was beheaded after a long period of suffering and torture. He was, incidentally, the brother of Maj. James Cushing who commanded the guerrillas in Cebu. Both had been mining engineers in the Philippines before the war, with reserve officer commissions, and both served with great courage and distinction.

On May 8th, Bob Lapham was still with me and the boys were planning a party for my birthday on the 9th. Unfortunately for the party but fortunately for us, our intelligence unit got word that the Japanese had learned of our position and were converging from three points ----- Moncada and Paniqui in Tarlac and Cuyapo in Nueva Ecija. We were able to evade the raiding force and withdrew to a barrio of Moncada where we had a birthday cake on May 9th in spite of the Japanese. Over the next ten days the Japanese patrols in Tarlac became more aggressive so I decided to move to Bayombong. Once across the provincial border we would be in the territory of another Japanese commander and fortunately they didn't cooperate with each other too well. Anyway we moved out across Lake Mangabel which is a large swampy area bordering the two provinces between Tarlac and Pangasinan. We crossed the Agno river into Bo. Manambong then to Bo. Nalsian, both of Bayombong, Pangasinan on May 19th.



From early October '42 until late February, 1943, I stayed with Boone. We travelled all over the northern half of Bataan, including crossing the mountains to Moron and Bagac, organizing units. It was not until 1 January, 1944 that I changed the designation from Northern Bataan District to the Bataan Military District. By that time, it had grown close to almost 3,000 officers and men.

When the BMD was reorganized it was composed of the following:

District Headquarters

C.O. - Major John Boone
C. of S. - Col. Jose Bernales
G-1 & Adj. Gen - LCL Felix Guerrero
G.2 - LCL Crispin Reyes
C-3 - Col. Jose Innocencio
Insp. Gen. - LCL Antonio Trinidad

1st Regiment - Dindlupihan

C.O. - LCL Ceferino Regala
X.O. - Maj. Santiago Sadsad

2nd Regiment - Hermose/Abucay

C.O. - LCL Anastacio Valencia

3rd Regiment - Morong/Bagac

C.O. - LCL Andres Migano

4th Regiment - Balanga/Limay

C.O. - LCL Federico Lumbré

Beyside Brigade - Samal/Orani

C.O. - LCL Victorio Abad



As mentioned earlier, I had assumed command of ECLGA on January 21st, 1943, upon learning of the capture of Capt. Barker while I was still in Bataan. By late Feb. of '43 the organizational structure and authority in Bataan was well established and my attention and presence was needed in Manila and in the other provinces of Central Luzon.

I left Boone in late February and headed for Pampanga with the intention of going to Manila before organizing the remaining provinces of Central Luzon. After the loss of Santos, one of those officers recruited by Andoy succeeded to his position and carried on. His name was Patricio Gonzalez, whose non-de-guerre was Col. Pat Gatson. Col. Gatson had re-established contact with most of those organized by Andoy and continued building the organization, especially the intelligence network. Because of the capture of several key people at this time, Fausto Alberto sent word that it was not advisable for me to come to Manila at that time.

Col. Edwin P. Faalsey - 6

nizing a community defense unit among people in his town. This man was lieutenant Abelardo de Dios who was inducted into ECLAGA by Capt. Barker. After this, he began to rapidly expand his organization as a guerrilla force which became the 1st Pampanga Regiment on August 18th '42, and later still the nucleus of the Pampanga Military District (PMD) on March 3, 1943. On August 18, 1942 I had gone to Sta. Rita to induct this unit as a Regiment.

Following the induction, I had scheduled a meeting with Col. Gyles Merrill, Lt. Col. Peter Calyer, Captains Crane and Kadell and a civilian engineer by the name of Tagle of Fuggle who were being hidden by the Jingo family in Bo. Natividad, Guagua after escaping from the death march. For security reasons, Col. Merrill asked that I not bring many troops with me so I sent most of my security back to headquarters and proceeded with one man, Sgt. Proceso Cadizon, to the meeting. At that time, those officers were not interested in getting involved in guerrilla warfare. After a pleasant but useless meeting, I left at dark for Timbo. At that time, I was suffering from dysentery and recovering from malaria so Proceso had arranged for a carabao sled to carry me. At about 9:30 to 10:30 PM we were nearing Bo. Dulong Santol, Porac when we heard the dogs barking. Upon learning that a unit of HUKS had stopped for the night, I decided to approach their commander to try and stop the fighting between our troops. I walked into the bahay he was using and introduced myself. After he recovered from his shock, and learned that I was alone with one man, he asked me outside and ordered his men to surround me. In my weakened condition, as they threw shells into the chambers, I blacked out. When I regained consciousness, I was in a hut, with Proceso holding my head in his lap, and only one guard. I was paralysed for some time after being conscious but fortunately had the presence of mind to remain quiet as feeling returned to my body.

Outside, we could hear argument going on. What had saved me was the fact that one of the HUKS was one of my soldiers from Troop G of the 26th Cavalry. He was arguing that I wasn't a German spy. During the argument, the guard went outside to observe and by then I had enough feeling back that Proceso was able to get me out the back into a cane field where we escaped. From that time until liberation there was open warfare between the HUKS and ECLGA. Most of the ECLGA men killed in action were killed by HUKS. What a travesty of patriotism!

After escaping, I got back to the Bq. of Maj. Ocampo in Porac. Before I could proceed from Porac to the headquarters in Bo. Timbo, it had been raided by the Japanese. While they didn't find the headquarters, and Capt. Barker had evacuated before the raid, he knew the Japanese were aware of the headquarters so it was necessary to move. Because of lingering effects of my "stroke", or whatever it was, Barker and I decided to go to the hideout of Bill and Martin Fassoth in the hills above Floridablanca where there were about 65 Americans including a Dr. Warshall. The doctor advised that I should rest for several weeks as I was suffering from many problems including high blood pressure. This was early September '42 so for the next two weeks we rested.

After Capt. Barker and I separated upon leaving the camp of Bill Fassoth, Barker headed back toward Porac and Sta. Rita where he made contact with de Dios. After preparing the way, in the latter part of October '42, Col. de Dios escorted Capt. Barker to Manila via Bo. Sta. Ines, Bettis, then by dugout to Bo. de la Paz, San Simon, thru Minalin on to Macabebe then to Bo. Sta. Lucia in Calumpit. There, they were met by Andoy Santos who escorted them to Obando then Tondo, Manila. De Dios returned to Pampanga and Barker stayed with Santos in Manila. More about Barker and Manila later.

Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 5

sulting from the HUK encounter, we decided that I would proceed to firm up the organization in Bataan while Barker would go to Manila in my place. Therefore, after resting, I proceeded to Bataan and Barker started back to Sta. Rita.

PAMPANGA MILITARY DISTRICT (PMD)

In understanding the history of ECLGA and PMD, you must be aware of not only the mechanics, but the problems of organizing. Because of the intense loyalty of the citizenry, the Japanese were less of a problem than one organization which, because of its marxist ideology, became our greatest headache.

As mentioned earlier, in Central Luzon only two guerrilla organizations apart from ECLGA were effective. (I do not consider Maj. Robert Lapham's Nueva Ecija/Eastern Pangasinan unit as separate from ECLGA since Lapham's authority derived from Thorpe and Barker. I will comment further on this unit when I discuss Pangasinan, Tarlac, and Nueva Ecija.) Of the two, the BMA of Col. Alejo Santos was effective them throughout. But the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon, better known as the HUKBALAHAP, or just HUKS, were a problem from the beginning; frequently, HUK units would enter a barrie and disarm those guerrillas who were part of ECLGA. As many of you may know, the HUKS were the military phase of the United Front Party and headed by a military committee. While this group masqueraded as agrarian reformers, there as that of Mao Tze Tung. In point of fact, our intelligence indicated that some of their supplies actually came from Mao on the Chinese mainland. Meanwhile among those HUK leaders in June of 1942 was one who was to later become HUK SUPREMO. His name was Luis Taruc and at that time, his title was "Political Commissar" of their Squadron 3B. While he was supposedly only responsible for political indoctrination of troops, he was for all purposes the commander and he later became the single most powerful HUK, even though ideologues like the "Lavas. ma" have been better known in the beginning.

Because of the increasing level of conflict between the HUKS and ECLGA, Thorpe made contact with the military committee and arranged for a conference to try and iron out the problems. On or about June 24th of 1943, Thorpe, Barker and several others from Thorpe's staff traveled inland to a meeting with the HUK military committee near the slopes of Mount Arayat. Mt. Arayat and the Candaba swamps had been the birthplace, as well as the focal point of the HUK movement from its inception. After several days of meetings, Thorpe returned with a signed agreement that the HUKS would place themselves militarily under LGAF, and stop the attacks on our people, while LGAF/ECLGA would not interfere with HUK political activities.

This exercise in diplomacy by Thorpe was a measure of our naivete viz-a-viz marxism in those days. Obviously, the HUKS thought better of their bargain after Thorpe left for within a matter of weeks they were forging the signature of Thorpe, Barker and myself to orders directing our units to turn over their arms to the HUK squadrons. In retrospect Thorpe was lucky that he was not "eliminated" during the conference for shortly thereafter Luis Taruc issued a directive to his units that Lieut. Edwin P. Ramsey was not an American but a German spy posing as an American; that Ramsey was to be captured and eliminated at all costs. How did I know of this order? I learned the hard way, being captured by one of the HUK units and escaping before being executed. How did this come about?

In July, Capt. Barker had met a young teacher from Sta. Rita who had been commissioned a few weeks before the war broke out but had not yet been assigned a unit. Unable to get an assignment after going to Bataan on his own he returned to Sta. Rita before the Japanese arrived and started orga-

Meanwhile, immediately upon my learning of the capture of Barker, around January 21st of 1943, I issued a general order to all units assuming command of ECLGA. I was at that time in Bataan completing the organization of the Bataan Military District of ECLGA. It was only a matter of a few weeks before our intelligence reports indicated that the Japanese had now elevated me to No. 1 on their wanted list. As for the Luzon Guerrilla Army Forces, no one was ever able to establish effective continuity over that command after the loss of Col. Thorpe, although Capt. Bernard Anderson tried to assert such authority without success and Col. Gykes Merrill made some unsuccessful efforts in that direction during the last few months of the occupation. After Thorpe, each of the units functioned separately and directly under General MacArthur's headquarters as soon as radio contact was established.

ECLGA ORGANIZATION

With the foregoing as an overview, let's look at the ECLGA organization. It really began in the middle of June, 1942, when after his return, Capt. Barker and I started organizing units in the Forac, Pampanga area in order to ensure, to the extent possible, the security of our headquarters. At first we experimented with organizational structure, forming so-called squadrons, first started by Col. Thorpe, as the major units. Later, these squadrons became regiments composed of platoons, companies and battalions, which were parts of Military Districts. After the initial units were formed during the period of July to September of 1942 we expanded these by establishing Military District Commands as rapidly as circumstances permitted. These were as follows:

Pampanga Military District
Bataan Military District
Pangasinan-Tarlac Military District
Nueva Ecija Military District
Manila Military District
Bulacan Military District.



Before going into the chronology of its organization, I should explain the procedure we used. Intelligence operatives were sent into a barrio, town or other locality to determine the loyalty of the leaders, we arranged clandestine meetings to determine their willingness to organize the people in their sphere of influence. Upon acceptance, these leaders were inducted into the organization. In many cases, the local leaders were not military men, so we would select from a growing number of escaped or released officers and soldiers those to be assigned as deputies to the civilian leaders to provide for organizational structuring, training and operations. This system was generally used at all levels except in cases where natural leaders had spontaneously started forming resistance units on their own before we came around. There were many of these and most were happy to join us as soon as they were contacted. After units had been organized, Barker and I would return and induct the whole group. We would then initiate an indoctrination and training program and then move on to the next group.

In late June of '42, we had inducted Alejandro Santos and Fausto Alberto into ECLGA. Andoy was a writer and Fausto a detective, both from Manila. They were already printing and distributing a propaganda paper from Bo. Timbo when we arrived. They became two of our first converts and the first heads of intelligence and propaganda for GHQ, ECLGA. In July of '42 they were sent to Manila to gather intelligence and begin collecting loyal and capable people as a foundation for what became the Manila Military District. By August, prior to my first serious HUK problem, Santos had organized a cadre of key people in Manila and wanted either Barker to order me to come and induct these people to instill confidence and morale. I was to go but because of my incapacity to bear the hard trip re-



Col. Edwin P. Ramsey - 2

Meanwhile, the beginning of the end for this magnificent Regiment came on April 7th, 1942, at 11:00 AM,² when the 26th Cavalry was released from Luzon Force reserve to the 11 Corps under Major General George M. Parker. It was then assigned to the remnants of the 31st Division under Brig. Gen. Clifford Bluemel who also had the 31st US Infantry Regiment assigned to him at that time. After the Japanese forced our withdrawal from positions astride Trail 2 near Trail 10 above the Limay/Lamao road on April 7th, Gen. Bluemel ordered a new defensive position along the south bank of Alongan river by daylight of the 8th. After suffering heavy Japanese tank and infantry attacks during the day, Bluemel ordered further withdrawal after dark. In the confusion, Troop G lost contact with the remainder of the Regiment and withdrew westward up the southern slopes of Mt. Limay. Having been cut off from the remainder of our forces, Troop G, having the 2nd squadron headquarters of Maj. James Blanning with us, continued to withdraw through the mountains and jungle arriving above Mariveles on the morning of April 10th. Learning then from the stragglers of the surrender of the Luzon Forces by Maj. Gen. Edward King on April 9th, Major Blanning³ gave those of us remaining the option of surrender or attempting escape.

Capt. Joseph R. Barker II, Troop G commander and I elected to take our chances. The unit disbanded and Joe Barker and I climbed to the top of Mt. Mariveles. After negotiating the crater rim of Mariveles, we descended the NE slopes and then up and over Mt. Samat which at that time was still solid jungle. Proceeding down the northern slopes of Samat, we reached the Orion-Bagac road which we crossed between moving Japanese columns during the night of April 14th. From then on we followed the foothills, paralleling the road and the death march, a few kilometers inland. After reaching Dinalupihan, Bataan we rested for a few days and then proceeded on April 18th to the hills above Porac, Pampanga, where we arrived on April 23rd the barrio of Timbo, the place where the ECLGA was born a little later.

Some of you may wonder what Barker and I had in mind when we decided to try to escape rather than surrender. We both knew that our military situation was hopeless. As a matter of fact, Gen. Wainwright shared mess, such as it was, with the officers of the 26th on the night of March 9th. At that time, he told us our rations, already down to a few ounces a day, could only last 30 days. Very prophetic! Anyway, Joe and I decided to try to make our way up to Pampanga, then across to the Sierra Madre mountains, down to the Bicol and hopefully then to Mindanao and on south to Australia. Now, to connect this original plan with later developments, we have to go back to January, shortly before the Luzon Force withdrew behind the MLR, which was the Orion-Bagac road. At that time, Lt. Col. Claude Thorpe, formerly Provost Marshall of Fort Stotsenberg, and another old cavalryman, was sent through the lines and out of Bataan with a small group of officers and men by Gen. McArthur with the mission of establishing resistance forces behind enemy lines. We knew that he was going to locate his headquarters on Mt. Pinatubo, behind Fort Stotsenberg. Capt. Barker and I decided to pass by and see Col. Thorpe before proceeding south. By chance it turned out that Bo. Timbo where we landed was one of his supply points which made it easy for us to locate him.

²From the Diary of Col. Wm. Chandler, 26th Cavalry Regiment, S-3 published in the Armored Cavalry Journal of July-August, 1947.

³Confirmed by the Diary of Major J. Blanning written in POW Camp Cabanatuan before his death.

WAR REBELS

THE EAST CENTRAL LUZON GUERRILLA AREA* - -

ORIGINS AND ORGANIZATION

Col. Edwin P. Ramsey



There have been many publications on various guerrilla units and their activities in the Philippines during World War II. But none have ever before been written with any authority or comprehensive knowledge about the East Central Luzon Guerrilla Area (ECLGA). What has been written has been fragmentary at best and in many cases inaccurate. This was the largest and certainly one of the most respected of those guerrilla units which paved the way for, and assisted the returning forces of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. Three thousand seven hundred (3,700) officers and thirty eight thousand five hundred (38,500)¹ men of ECLGA were attached to the 6th US Army of General Walter Krueger in Central Luzon during the liberation campaign. Unhappily, less than 19,000 remained on the recognized rosters after revisions were made by AFWESPAC and PHILRYCOM in 1946/48. Over 5,000 were killed or mission in action, with many more wounded, captured, and tortured. These are only statistics, but they give some idea of the size, scope and effectiveness of this organization.

Why has this story never before been told? Because after a year in the hospital, subsequent to my return on June 16th, '45 to the States, I didn't have the emotional stability to think about it and I was the only one left alive with a comprehensive knowledge of the ECLGA's history from beginning to end. At first I tried, but suffered a nervous breakdown. Fortunately, I still have the manuscript I prepared with a ghost writer from notes I had and from memory, in 1945/46. This was during the year I spent in and out of Winters General Hospital in Topeka, Kansas. It was these recollections that led to the breakdown. One day, I will put it all together in a publishable form.

This paper, due to time constraints will deal principally with the origins and organization of ECLGA. However, I will be glad to answer questions outside the scope of the paper during the open forum.

Meanwhile, I am getting ahead of myself. How did it all come about? How did I get involved? As a "backgrounder", I arrived in the Philippines in early June of '41 as a 2nd Lieut. coming from the 11th Cavalry in California and assigned to the 26th Cavalry Regiment-Philippine Scouts. Shortly after arrival, I was promoted to 1st Lieut. serving as a platoon leader of Troop G through the fall of Bataan. The 26th was part of the non-divisional units attached to the Philippine Division (PS) commanded by Major General Jonathan Wainwright. Being an old cavalryman, and knowing its advanced state of readiness, he committed this great Regiment in almost every major delaying action from Damortis to Bataan. During this campaign, the 26th Cavalry wrote one of the most brilliant chapters in the annals of the US Horse Cavalry's history, but it suffered terrible losses. That is another important part of history which must be told fully some time.

*Paper read at the History Seminar of the National History Institute on "The Resistance Movement During World War II", held at the National Library Auditorium, Metro Manila on September 15-16, 1983.

¹AFWESPAC Guerrilla Affairs Records - 1946

[RG-46, Box 2, Fol 9] 14P.