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Hqs., 118th Inf., In the Field  
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Authority NO 883078

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Authority: ND 883078

HEADQUARTERS, 118th INFANTRY

In the field  
18 July 1944

SUBJECT: Personal Observations in 1st Bn  
TO: The Commanding Officer, 118th Infantry

1. In compliance with verbal instructions from that Office for the undersigned to make observations regarding the relationships between the CO of the 1st Bn and the officers and men of said Bn the attitude of the civilian population toward the former, the following report is submitted:
  - a. Some officers and EM evinced a partiality for and approval of Capt. M. O. Orbase.
  - b. Some officers and EM are non-committal.
  - c. Some officers and EM are irked by Capt. Orbase's ultra strict and harsh ways of dealing with them. These officers and EM deplore especially Capt. Orbase's bawling out of anybody, officer and soldier, in the presence of many members of the command.
  - d. Lt. F. Matas himself expressed the opinion that if Lt. Bella had not arrived and paid the officers and EM of the unit about two thirds of the command would have walked out and proceeded to Hqrs., 10 MD. He said further that even with the prior discontentment effaced by the payment of allowances, there are still over 50% of the command who are in the command but are pro-Matas. Lt. Matas has a CP of his own and does not report to the office for work. Actually Matas CP high up in the mountains.
  - e. The civilians are decidedly pro-Matas. During the day and a half that the undersigned stayed in the Matas CP he witnessed civilians bearing foodstuffs to Lt. Matas from early morning to late evening. In a conversation with some civilians in a place kilometers away from both the Orbase CP and the Matas CP, the undersigned gathered the impression that these civilians had no liking for Capt. Orbase. These, too, disapproved of Capt. Orbase's harsh ways.
  - f. It may also be mentioned here that the undersigned had a conversation with Capt. Guballa who was in the Bn CP at the time. Capt. Guballa confided in the undersigned that he had tried to advise Capt. Orbase not to be too harsh with his officers and men as he was dealing with a virtually civilian army--civilians who were not used to bawlings out and severe reprimands.
  - g. On the 3rd July 1944 the undersigned was informed by two soldiers, one by the name of Cocal, that Lt. Hermo was killed

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in a raid by 5 Japanese soldiers and 15 BC. On inquiry, the undersigned learned that the enemy patrol was guided by a certain Zaballero, an Acting Officer of the 1st Bn, who was called won by Capt. Orbase in the presence of officers and EM and who had surrendered to the Japs as a result.

2. The above statements are not opinions, in whole or in part, of the undersigned but are rather statements of facts seen and heard during the stay of the undersigned in the 1st Bn.

(SGD.) ALFREDO M. BUSTAMANTE  
Captain, Infantry, USMIP  
CO, Hqrs. Bn.

/jb

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

/s/ Genaro V. Virtusio  
GENARO V. VIRTUSIO  
3rd Lt., Inf.  
Personnel Adjutant  
19 July 1944

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*R. B. Slade*  
R. B. SLADE  
2d Lt, Inf  
Actg Ass't, Adj Gen

*E. T. Jernigan*

(Continued)

HEADQUARTERS 118<sup>th</sup> INFANTRY

In the Field  
18 July 44

SUBJECT: Personal Observation in the 1st Bn  
TO : CO 118<sup>th</sup> Inf Regt

1. In compliance with your verbal instructions for the undersigned to make observations regarding the relationship of the CO 1st Bn with the officers and men of that unit and with the civilians residing within the garrisoned area of that Battaion, the following report is submitted:

(a) Some officers and enlisted men in the 1st Bn are resentful of the harsh and strict ways of the Bn Commander.

(b) As most of the officers of the 1st Bn even civilians before they dislike very much the way Capt Orbase bawls out his subordinates. A very striking example of this was the bawling out in the presence of many of Acting Officer Zarabello, who thru spite and shame, deserted the unit and surrendered with one Automatic rifle to the Japanese on 1 July 44, the said Zarabello guided an enemy patrol of five (5) Japs and fifteen (15) BC, which led to the killing 3d Lt Marciano Iermo.

(c) As a sign of discontent among some if not many in the unit, officers like 2d Lt Verceles and 3d Lt Palarca have signified their desire to be transferred to other units.

(d) The Bn Comdr and the Bn Executive officer do not work together and their CP are about five (5) kilometer hiking-distance from each other. While the Bn Comdr has the Bn Staff and the important papers with him the Executive Officer has the most number of heavy weapons which in any eventuality cannot be had for the protection and security and defense of the Bn Staff and papers. This situation very clearly denotes non-cooperation between them.

(e) In a conversation which I have heard between Capt. Bustamante and Lt Matas, the latter had clearly stated that if Lt Bella did not arrive on time and if the Bn was not paid right away there would have been no 1st Bn under Capt Orbase. Lt. Matas said that he was about to march Agusan with all the officers and men formerly under his command.



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