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HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMI FORCES WESTERN PACIFIC
G-3, GUERRILLA AFFAIRS BRANCH

APO 707

REPORT ON GUERRILLA AFFA: BICOL PENINSULA

Lieutenant Robert L. Morton, Contact Team "G", proceeded to the Bicol Peninsula to contact all known guerrilla units in that region. The following report is a summary of the investigation, and a few facts of interest.

Geographical Data

The Bicol Feminsula is located on the southermost tip of Lunon, 120 degrees, 30 dintus longitude and LiO degrees latitude, and is comprised of six provinces, namely: Genarines Borte, Genarines Bur, Albay, Sorseogan, Ostandumes, and Mischate. The latter two provinces are not an integral part of the peninsula, for they are islands near the coast of southern Lunon but they are included geographically as a portion of the Bicol Region. The population of the Bicol Region is approximately 1,500,000 inhabitants whose occupations consists of farming, fishing, mining and lumbering. The most important oftics of the Bicol are Legach, Albay, the capital of Albay and the most important portj Screegon, Screegon,

Transportation

The best node of transportation to Blool from Central Luson is by air. There is a landing field at Legaspi, Albay, large enough to land planes as large as B-A's. By air it takes approximately one hour fifteen minutes from Hamila to Legaspi. It is impossible to travel by weblicle, for many of the bridges are out between Manila and Legaspi. Rall is possible, but a very poor means of transportation, for part of the trip must be made by truck, rivers crossed by boat, and the train itself is very slow and overcowded.

While in the region, transportation is available from the 3/lst Infantry, 86th Bivision, which has its Legaspi Base Command at Legaspi, Albay. Transportation may also be obtained from the Military Police Gommand at Legaspi. Civilian transportation is available through the Alatco Bus lines, but again this too is a very poor mode of transportation. Reads in the area are passable but they are in very poor condition, and on two coascions ferries

must be made to cross rivers between Naga, Camarines Sur and Daet, Camarines Norte.

Communications

Communication by radio is available through the Legangh Base or and also at the Military Folice Commands at Legangh, Albay, Naga, Camarines Sur, and Daet, Camarines Norte, Messages may be sent and received from these stations. Communication by telephone exists only within the Schh Area Command, and the Military Folice Commands, but it is impossible to communicate from one city to another.

Air courier service is available through the 86th Division Area Command, but unreliable for no strict schedule is followed.

History and Activities

On 12 December 1941, the Japanese landed at Legaspi as the string point for their southern promg which was to push northward and join forces with those which landed along Lamon Bay. Ment of the loyal inhabitants of the cities, towns, and berrion took the hills. Wendering remants of escaped and unsurrendered USAFER soldiers and loyal civilians began to organize guerrilla units, seach dominating certain areas within the provinces. For a time active guerrilla resistance caused the Japanese considerable trouble; but gradually lack of funds and supplies haspered ther activities. The primary activities of the units were to preserve law and order, encourage food production, intelligence, substage, and harrassithe eneary. Engagements with the eneary were negligible in that there were but few weepons in the region. Several small units domed the guise of loyal guerrillas for the purpose of benditry and to force tribute from divilians.

The first, and best known guerrilla unit to be formed in the Bicol region was organized on 18 December 1941 in Camarines Norte by Lt Wenceslao Q. Vinsons, former governor of the province. This force of about 100 armed men raided Japanese garrisons throughout January to July 1942, their most notable exploit being a threeday assault on the provincial capital of Daet, 30 April 1942, which resulted in the temporary capture of the town with severe losses to the Japanese defenders. Increased pressure from the Japanese forced the unit to withdraw to Camp Abask where it was practically disbanded. Supposedly trusted men of the group betrayed the position of the camp and on 8 July 1942, Lt Vinsons was captured and executed by the Japanese. Francisco Boayes (alias Turko), who was Vinsons! assistant, took over the command, and although Boayes appears to have been a fearless gang leader and was one of the best known anti-Jspanese fighters he was also undisciplined and unruly. His unit became bandits and caused as much trouble for the inhabitants of Bicol as they did for the Japanese.

Next to Vinsons, the nost noted guarrilla leader was Faustino Flor, commanding officer of the Cesp Isarog Currillas. The outstanding activity of Flor was the study on the Japanese occupied town of Bags, Cemarines Sur on 2 Nay 1942, in which some thirty insertions and other prisoners who were about to be executed by the Japanese ware freed.

On 24 May 1942. Flor with several of his officers was persuaded by General Francisco Han commander of the puppet Bureau of Constabulary, to surrender. Teofile D. Fadus took over the command of the mutt, but the unit does not appear to have been very active against the granese under his control. Flor escaped prison and organized another guerrilla unit in Albay, but the activities of this unit were elight and with very little resistance.

One of the largest disputes in Biool was the question as to who should command the 5th Military District. It Gol Bant to Albay, Major Lapus and Governor Escudero of Sorregon, and olds of to be the Military Commander, but Zabat was more successful than the others. Zabat turied to unify the guerrilla units in Bicol and, on paper, he was successful, for he had the 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 52nd, 52

There were a few disputes among the guerrilla leaders, the most custanding being that between Lapus and Escudero. The exact reason is unknown, but it is believed that the dispute was chiefly caused by both leaders wanting to claim control of guerrilla units in Sorsegon. Due to amisosity encouraged by the two leaders these two units continuously fought one another during the Japanese regime. Other units having conflicts were the units of Juan Q. Wirands and Francisco D. Boyass (Turko), but the reason for their conflict is questionable.

A great number of women are considered as guerrillas by the unit commanders for Zabat had issued orders on 24 December 1945 in effect that "all able bodied female residents of the town between the ages of 18 and 55 are bereby drafted into the service of the Women Auxiliary Service." The purpose of the Women Auxiliary Service was for estimateration and supervision of the Neddied Corps, but their activities were practically nil. (See Inclosure #1)

THE ARRIVAL OF UNITED STATES FORCES

At the time of the landing of the 158th Regimental Combat Team at Legaspi, Albay, 1 April 1945, the leaders of the various guerrilla organizations operating on the Biool Peningula claimed that varying numbers of personnel were members of their groups and each supported his claim with rosters. There were conflicting boasts of dominance and there were many petty jealousies among them. Each guerrilla DECLASSIFIED
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commander was asking for the recognition of as many men as he could muster, thus hoping to gain for himself a higher rank.

In accordance with previous reports, It Col F. B. Thempson and Majors Bideed, 5-2, 15th RCT, devoted their entire time to solving the guerrilla problem. After investigation of the several unit, each was allotted the strength that it would substite for recognition. Each commander than screened his organization to conform with that number and reorganized it under Philippine Army 70/25, which was the latest 70/2 available to them. The units were recognized by the Sixth Army on the recommendation of the aforementioned officers, and these units have hence been processed in the "Bicol Brigade,"

The leaders were then told that no more recognition of any unit would be made. Upon hearing things much of the clasoring for further recognition diminished. However, the leaders were not completely satisfied but they accepted as fact the statement of Col Thompson and Majo Blades there would be no more recognition. The units activated in the Blool Brigade as of 20 June 1945 may be found in inclosure #2.

It is believed that from May 1945 to October 1945 the Biool Pointsula was more or less considered closed for recognition of additional units, and no action was taken during this period. In October 1945 the request for recognition of the Biue Eagle Brigade was reconsidered, and the undereigned officer was sent to the Bicol Region to contact and investigate this unit. Thus the contact of the was again opened for recognition, and as a result approximately for the present of the sent substituted their request for recognition typewer (37) units here substituted their request

The undersigned officer has investigated the majority of these units, and in his investigation it was found that the Sixth Army made a wise choice as the number of personnel recognized from the various units. The undersigned states 'number of personnel' worthy of recognition have been recognized rather than the 'sumbers worthy of recognition,' in that it was revealed in the investigation that numbers rather than mames of personnel attached to the United States Forces were taken and, when recognition was given, the commanding officer of the unit concerned was saked to give the commanding officer of the unit concerned was saked to give the many cases relatings and the mashers of list unit. Thus, in many cases relatings and collection the recognition of the recognition of the restriction of the restrict

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Recommendations

In that the majority of the units in Bicol have been contacted it is recommended that, to give justice to the remaining units, they be contacted either by units or by personal contact and an investigation made. It is not, however, recommended that additional units be favorably considered for recognition since it is believed that each unit, deemed worthy of recognition, was given its proportionate quota by Major Blieden.

Robert L. Morton,
ROBERT L. MORTON
1st Lt, Ord

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