

EXTRACTS
FROM
THE HISTORY OF THE VISAYAN-MINDANAO
FORCES

DECLASSIFIED
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PART 1

INTRODUCTION

"Instructor System"

American officers, American non-commissioned officers, and Philippine Scout non-commissioned officers, were designated as "Instructors" of the Philippine Army during the mobilization and training period, (Sept. 1-Nov 30). Emphasis was put on the fact that these officers and NCO's, although responsible for the mobilization and training, were instructors only- that they were not in "command" that the utmost tact must be employed so as not to hurt the fine sensibilities of the Filipinos, that it must be remembered that the detail was temporary in nature, that the "instructors" would be relieved not later than the last of November, and that the P.A. would then carry on without benefit of the "instructors".

(1) Language Difficulties- Not only between the American instructors and the Filipinos, but also in many cases between the Filipinos. In some camps none of the Filipino Officers could speak the language of their men. Tagalog Officers from Luzon commanding Visayan out-fits, etc., created a very real problem, and one for which no adequate solution was ever found. Transfers within the Force were made, but a large proportion of the officers were from Luzon and did not speak the various dialects of the Visayas. (This of course brings up the lack of unity in the Philippines, inherent among peoples living on islands, a hundred different dialects, different customs, and often an inherited enmity towards neighboring tribes. The discussion of the effect of this dis-unity upon the Philippine Army is beyond the scope of this work; but in order to understand the lack of respect which the Filipino Officer was able to command from his men, with the consequent failure of the Filipinos as officers, this disunity should not be underestimated.)

(2) Incompetent Officers and NCO's Many of the officers and non-commissioned officers were totally unqualified for their jobs. There were many First Sgts. and Company Clerks who could neither read nor write. These officers and non-commissioned officers were assigned by name upon mobilization by the mobilization order issued from Philippine Army Headquarters, and the American "Instructors" could do nothing to remedy the situation. As "Instructors" they could neither reduce nor get rid of the unfit.

(3) Lack of Disciplinary Power- Until war was actually declared there were no courts-martials-- and even then the Filipinos could be tried only before courts composed entirely of Filipinos. Conviction, to say the least, was improbable.

(4) Lack of adequate Equipment- There was a deplorable lack of essential supplies of all kinds. The Philippine Army simply did not have the supplies to issue, and before

supply could be opened the war had started and communication with Manila interrupted. Those supplies available locally, such as cleaning materials, toilet paper, target materials, lumber, nails, etc. were purchased and charged to USAFFE funds. This was necessary in order to function at all. But such purchases were, of course, unauthorized, and normal red-tape began to take its toll of the time and energy of the "Instructors" responsible

(On February 13, 1942, the following message was received, quote, "FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS BEING SENT TO MAJOR BYRD COMMA ARMY TRANSPORTS SERVICE CEBU ISLAND COLON ARMED GUARDS FURNISHED BY SHARP SHOULD BE RETAINED ON ALL BOATS OPERATED BY YOU STOP MOVEMENTS THE E BOATS SHOULD BE COORDINATED THROUGH SHARP FOR TACTICAL REASONS AND FOR SAFETY OF BOAT IN ARRIVING AT DOCKS AS SOME PIERS HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR DEMOLITION STOP INTERESTS IN ALL BOATS F RERLY OPERATED BY SHARP IN LIST FURNISHED YOU WILL BE RETAINED BY CHARTER UNDER YOUR CONTROL STOP REQUESTS BY CIVILIAN AGENCIES FOR LEGITIMATE AND NECESSARY WATER TRANSPORT SHOULD BE MADE TO YOU END MACARTHUR" Unquote.

PART II

THE BATTLE OF MINDANAO

MAPS: C & C Survey
1941 Mindanao, P.I. 1/6000000

The battle for Mindanao although commencing in force with the invasion of Cotabato and Parang on April 29, 1942; actually began with the attack and capture of Davao City, December 20, 1941. Digos and Zamboanga were attacked March 1, 1942. Hence from the very start of military operations in the Philippines there was continuous fighting in Mindanao; namely at Zamboanga, Digos, and in the Moncayo Area of Davao Province. (East of Davao City, this front opened by troops under the command of Colonel Ben Hur Chastaine in February 1942.)

On April 27th airplane reconnaissance over south Cebu and Dumaguete, Negros revealed that six enemy transports were steaming in a southeasterly direction. On April 28th reports from Colonel A.T. Wilson at Zamboanga, indicated that six transports and two destroyers were maneuvering in the Basilan Straits. Radio request was made to have medium bombers fly from Australia to bomb this convoy, but this was refused by higher authority. Airplane reconnaissance over the Moro Gulf on the afternoon of April 28th was made but no ships were sighted. However, as it was expected that this convoy was intended for either Cotabato, Parang, Or Malabang, both the Lanao and the Cotabato-Davao Sectors had been alerted and warned to check their military demolitions etc. The Cotabato Davao Force which had the Alien Concentration Camp at Fort Pickit was notified that if necessity demanded, the prisoners would be released and turned towards the Korondal Valley region, that under no circumstances would they be taken towards the Bukidnon-Lanao region.

On April 29th, Communications From Colonel Duque, commanding the Parang Force, indicated that that five transports were landing in Parang Harbor and that furious fighting was in progress. Later in the day Gen-

eral Vachon reported the loss of Cotabato City and the retirement of Colonel Nelson's troops to Km. 17. Communication with both sectors was excellent. Reports from Colonel Duque and General Fort were frequently received giving the situation in detail. On the evening of April 29, a P-35 flew over Parang Harbor, dropping two one hundred pound bombs - no report as to whether or not the enemy ships were hit.

Reports on April 30th indicated that the Japanese were moving up the Cotabato River in steel barges, (estimated to be a force of 300 men), covered by air support, and were simultaneously advancing along the Cotabato-Pickit highway. Contrary to instructions issued prior to the engagement, the alien prisoners were moved North from Pickit to Maridngao. Colonel Thompson, Force Chief of Staff, and Captain Bucher, Asst. C of S. G-3, were ordered to the Cotabato-Davao Sector to confer with General Vachon and report on the situation in that Sector.

Action against Colonel Duque in the area east of Parang had practically ceased. He was holding about five Kilometers from the harbor. The Japanese however had extended to Malabang and had gained contact with the Sixty First Infantry. From the reports (meager) of this day, April 30th, it appeared that the main effort of the Japanese was directed towards Carmen Ferry in the Cotabato-Davao Sector.

On May 1st reports indicated that the main Japanese effort was not towards Carmen Ferry but along the Malabang-Ganassi road towards Dansalan. This attack supported by tanks, artillery, and airplanes succeeded in reaching the south end of Lake Dapao, thereby penetrating the strongest positions of the Malabang Ganassi defenses.

In the meantime, the only reports received from the Cotabato-Davao sector were to the effect that Colonel Thompson and Captain Bucher had left by horse to go cross country in an effort to contact Colonel Nelson on the Cotabato Front, with whom communication had been lost. Reports also received of Japanese troops at Duluwan and at Paidu-Palangui Ferry.

Two P-40's were used to support and attack by the 81st Infantry on the Moncayo Front. (It was hoped that this attack would put sufficient pressure on the Japanese as to require them to reinforce this front with troops from the Digos Front). The airplanes returned stating that targets could not be found and reporting only negative information. Later reports indicated that the attack failed due to enemy artillery and a Japanese "Float" plane that strafed and bombed the troops.

Since contact had been lost with Colonel Thompson, and no information was being received from the Cotabato-Davao Force, Lieut. Colonel Humber, the Force G-2, was sent south to ascertain the situation on that Front.

Report was received from Col. Humber that on the morning of May 2nd the Japanese were at Paidu-Palangui, that troops were being withdrawn from the Digos Front, That Colonel Nelson was fighting in the vicinity of Midsayap, no news of Colonel Thompson.

General Fort reported at noontime that Dansalan had been heavily bombed and that heavy fighting was going on around Canassi. That afternoon Army and Navy personnel scheduled to leave for Australia on the FBY (which could not take off with its full load due to a damaged hull) arrived at the Cp at Del Monte and reported heavy fighting in the vicinity of the Lake. Communications with General Fort were broken but reports from stragglers indicated that all troops in the Lanao Sector had been committed in an effort to stop the Japanese but to no avail - penetration had been made and our troops were withdrawing in disorder.

An afternoon airplane reconnaissance reported that the enemy convoy was entering Macajalar Bay. Radio orders were sent to the Agusan sector to have the Third Philippine Pe march on Maluko via Claveria, under the command of Lieut. Colonel Roy Gregory.

One P-40 and one P-35 bombed the enemy convoy as it entered Macajalar Bay--results negative; heavy overcast prevented further attempts to bomb and orders were issued for air activity at daybreak.

From 12:30 Am to 1:30 AM May 2nd, the demolition plan for his front was effected. Principal demolitions were: steel girder bridge over the Cagayan River, the Cagayan Dock, the Del Monte shops at Bugo, and road craters on the Sayre Highway leading onto the Bukidnon plateau. At about 1:45 Am five transports were observed off shore between Bugo and Tagloan, the sixth transport was off Cagayan Point. Shortly thereafter the transports off Bugo were observed lowering small boats preparatory to making a landing. Sporadic firing from the emplaced .50 and .30 caliber machine guns on the beach commenced. Successful landings were made at Bugo and Tagloan Point. About an hour or so later reports were received that after intensive shelling from the enemy destroyers, the lone transport off Cagayan Point likewise effected a successful landing but that the Japanese at this point were being contained within a limited area. At dawn counterattack by the 103rd Infantry Regiment was planned.

Orders were issued for the immediate movement of two battalions of the 93rd Infantry Regiment from Santa Fe and Libona. The 62nd Infantry was ordered to move at once by daylight motor infiltration from Lake Pinamalay to Alao. The detachment of Force Reserve Artillery was ordered to be in position covering the Sayre Highway demolition on the forward edge of the Bukidnon Plateau. The 102nd Division with whom constant communication was maintained were notified of all these movements of the Force Reserve. By 8:30 AM, the Japanese, in addition to gaining control of the beach road between Bugo and the Tagloan River, had taken the Sayre Highway up to the edge of the Plateau where the road crater, covered by the 2.95 guns stopped this advance. In fact, reports were later received indicating that the 61st Field Artillery Regiment had voluntarily given up their beach road from Bugo to Cagayan where it exposed the right of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, thereby causing their retirement from Cagayan when Japanese units, later in the day, came up the beach road.

The dawn attack by our airplane was made according to schedule, but without noticeable results. This plane then flew to Maramag for engine overhaul and was not thereafter engaged. (The last of the Air Force in the Philippines).

During midmorning, hostile aircraft began searching out the 2.95 gun battery which was engaged in halting the Japanese attack astride the Sayre Highway. The Force Scout Car (locally improvised) shot down two Japanese planes. At noontime a detachment from the 93rd Infantry Regiment consisting of machine guns and riflemen was sent to the road crater position in order to provide local security for the artillery.

Events seemed to be moving satisfactorily. The 93rd Infantry was completing its daylight movement from Libona and Santa Fe to Alae Junction without mishap. The 62nd Infantry had started its movement from Lake Pinamelo to Del Monte. The front lines appeared to be holding. At Force Headquarters plans were being made for a counterattack to regain the plateau nose in front of the road crater on the Sayre Highway.

About 4:00 PM, the 102nd Division reported; that their right flank was disintegrating; that an enemy cavalry force estimated as about five hundred strong had turned their flank and was gaining access to the top of the plateau; that the situation was so critical that the movement of the 102nd Division command post to a position in rear of Alae Junction was in progress.

The Force Command Post displaced to a prepared position about one half kilometer South of Dalirig. The Force Commander then went forward to contact the commander of the 102nd Division.

The 102nd Division had completed the movement of its Command Post to the town of Tankulan. When the Force Commander arrived at Tankulan he found the Commander of the 102nd Division in conference with the C/O. 81st Field Artillery Regiment, and the C.O. 61st Field Artillery. After listening to the accounts of these commanders it was decided to abandon the idea of a counter-attack and retire to a partially prepared position along the south side of the Dalirig Canyon.

The 81st and the 61st Field Artillery Regiments were to be assembled and moved by a night withdrawal to Dalirig and Sanakanan respectively. The 103rd Infantry Regiment was to continue on its previously assigned mission of covering the Cagayan Valley. The 93rd Infantry Regiment, with the Force Artillery Gun Detachment attached; was assigned the mission of covering the withdrawal of the 61st and 81st Artillery Regiments. Upon completion of the withdrawal the 93rd Infantry was to move to Cancanon-Pontian, the Artillery Detachment to Dalirig. The 62nd Infantry Regiment in its motor movement north from Lake Pinamelo was to be moved into position at Dalirig. By midmorning May 3, all movements had been successfully completed.

Orders were issued assigning the Dalirig sector to the 102nd Division- (for this defense; the 62nd Infantry Regiment, the 81st Field Artillery Regiment- strength at this time about 225 men, companies C and E 43 Infantry Regiment (P8) and the Force Artillery Detachment.)

The Sumilao-Pontian Sector, defended by the 93rd Infantry Regiment and the 61st Field Artillery Regiment, was put under the command of Colonel Dalton, the former Force Reserve commander.

The remainder of May 3rd was spent in organizing the positions for defense- (Dalirig Sector; 62nd Infantry on the left with the Artillery Detachment in general support, the two Scout Companies in reserve position in the town of Dalirig, the 81st Field Artillery in Division Reserve in draw on half a kilometer south of Dalirig. The Sumilao-Pontian Sector; 61st Field Artillery Regiment, strength at this time about 650 men, to the right of Pontian in physical contact with the 62nd Infantry on its right; the 93rd Infantry Regiment on the Left.)

Orders were issued for the Line of Communications Battalion to send patrols by way of Alanib and Basak to contact the 103rd Infantry Regiment. Patrols were also sent to Claveria to contact and guide the Third Philippine Constabulary Regiment.

On the Cotabato Front, the Digos Force had been successfully withdrawn to Carmen Ferry and union made with the Cotabato Force. Defenses were being prepared north of Carmen Ferry. No news was received from the Linao Force.

May the 4th and 5th, on the Dalirig-Sumilao Front, was spent in strengthening and improving the positions. Enemy activity was confined principally to air reconnaissance, slight bombing and strafing. Enemy cavalry patrols were active in the Del Monte Area. On the Cotabato-Davao Front the Japanese gained control of the Carmen Ferry Area. There was still no news from the Linao Sector. A force of two hundred men from the Air Base group was sent to prepare a defensive position in the vicinity of Basak (to defend the pass leading into the Cagayan Valley).

On the morning of May 6th the enemy drove in the outpost at Tankulan and entered the town in force. Late in the afternoon (about 4:30 PM) enemy Artillery registered on the Dalirig position. The enemy air force was active throughout the day. The Sumilao-Pontian Sector was ordered to concentrate the entire 61st Field Artillery Regiment on the left of the 62nd Infantry- with physical contact at the boundary on the west slope of the Dalirig hill mass. In anticipation of an enemy attempt to penetrate the position in the vicinity of the boundary between Sectors it was directed that the 93rd Infantry Regiment be moved east of Pontian, so that if necessity demanded it would be available to act as a reserve at the threatened point.

On May 7th there was intermittent enemy shelling of the Dalirig position from dawn until dusk.

On May 8th the enemy artillery fire increased in intensity, aerial strafing and bombing, particularly along the Sayre Highway, also increased in intensity. Small arms fire, particularly on the left front of the Dalirig position, commenced in the afternoon and it became apparent that enemy infantry units were attempting to infiltrate through that portion of the position. That night the Force command post was moved south to Impasugon.

Confirmed reports of the disintegration of the 103rd Infantry Regiment in the Cagayan Valley were received- (only ninety men of this Regiment came out of the valley through the Basak Pass) The 101st Division

was ordered to send two companies with a platoon of machine guns to the vicinity of Alao-Basak in order to prevent a break through into the central plateau. This order was revoked shortly thereafter upon the arrival of the Force Chief of Staff from the Cotabato-Davao Front with the news that the 101st Division was in such a serious condition that not even two companies could be spared from that front.

Shortly after midnight May 8th-9th reports received from Dalirig indicated that enemy infiltration tactics on the left of the Dalirig hill mass were proving successful and that the Japanese were gaining control of the hill. This engagement continued throughout the morning of May 9th accompanied by artillery bombardment of Dalirig and Maluko. Enemy air force continued to be active over the entire area. The continued and increasing pressure of the enemy demoralized the defending troops, and it became apparent that the position could not be held. Decision was made to withdraw and reform on a position along the Canyon one half kilometer south of Maluko. On the evening of May 9th about 150 men were salvaged from the Dalirig Force and put into the Maluko position.

Plans were made and orders issued for the withdrawal of the Sumilao-Pontial Force to the canyon position north of the town of Sumilao; and for the motor movement of one battalion of the 93rd Infantry to the Maluko Position.

On the evening of May 9th decision was made to suspend fighting on all fronts in Mindanao at daybreak May 10th. This was done without event. On the afternoon of May 10th Lieutenant Colonel Haba, Imperial Japanese Army, with staff officers from Lieutenant General Homma, accompanied by Colonel Jesse T. Traywick of General Wainwright's Staff, arrived at Impasugong with orders and instructions for the unconditional surrender of the Visayan-Mindanao Force.

APPENDIX

EXTRACTS FROM

THE

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

62nd Infantry

The regiment stayed at Alao up to May 1, 1942, when another order sent the regiment by bus to Lake Pinamaloy. As the Japanese had landed at Bugo at about 2:00 AM of the 3rd, the regiment moved again in broad daylight by bus from Lake Pinamaloy to Tankulan - busses moving at a five minute interval. There was sufficient transportation for two battalions moved to Dalirig. The 3rd Battalion arrived at about 6:00 PM and the 2nd Battalion at about 9:00 PM.

93rd Infantry

No further orders were received until 9:30 AM. At that time the Regimental Commander was ordered to report to the Commanding General at CPT. I reported to the Commanding General and received orders to take

sufficient riflemen to the vicinity of KP 19 in order to protect both flanks of the 2.95 Field Artillery Gun Detachment commanded by Major Philipps and also to take one section of .50 Cal MG and put them in position so as to cover the demolition on the Sayre Highway.

Two rifle platoons of Co "B" and one section of air cooled Cal .50 MG were assembled at Casa Manana. The Regimental Commander accompanied by Capt. C. R. Finigen and Lt. Keith Williams proceeded to Km 19. Upon our arrival in the vicinity of Km 19 one platoon of riflemen were put on position on the right flank and one platoon on the left flank of the Field Artillery Detachment. The section of air cooled .50 Cal MG were put in a defiled position about 400 yards northeast of the demolition on the Sayre Highway. From this position the .50 Cal MG could fire on enemy position on a hill in rear of the demolition. Both of these units remained in position until 7:30 PM when the Field Artillery Detachment withdrew. During the afternoon the .50 Cal MG section fired on a group of about 10 bicyclists and also on an enemy airplane. Reports have been received that the plane was shot down but this fact was never verified although several people saw the plane disappear.

At 5:30 PM orders were received to withdraw to Sumilao and to organize a defensive position on the Kulaman River. The message also stated that the 93rd Infantry might be put on its own. It was not difficult to read the handwriting on the wall. Orders were issued to withdraw the regiment and to occupy the Kulaman River position. The regiment was to withdraw in the following order. 2nd Bn, Hq Bn, 1st Bn and the 3rd Bn. At 6:00 PM the enemy laid down a rolling mortar and light artillery barrage on the right sector of the 1st Bn, which lasted until 7:30 PM.

At 7:00 PM, the 2nd Bn passed through Puntian enroute to Sumilao and was followed immediately by the Hq Bn. The 1st Bn passed Puntian at 10:30 PM. The 3rd Bn arrived in Puntian at 1:00 AM. I arrived in Sumilao at 3:00 AM on May 10th and was informed of the proposed surrender. I ordered all Bns into Sumilao to bivouac. The last element arrived in Sumilao at 6:00 AM.

103rd Infantry

At about 7:00 PM I contacted the 102nd Division by phone and learned that the 81st and 61st were holding their 2nd defense position. The 103rd had no further contact with the forces on our right.

2.95 Mountain Gun Battery

From 4:30 AM until 7:00 AM on May 3 we dug fox holes. During this time PL soldiers from the beach regiments straggled up the road in groups of from three to eight with frightened and incoherent stories of the happenings on the beach. At about 6:00 AM I was met by Capt. Speck, Communication Officer, who, anxious to get a crack at the enemy, used the pretext of putting in a phone in order to join me as observer. At about 7:30 AM, with foxholes still half done due to very rocky soil, we were raked by Japanese machine gun fire. Being in the open our position was untenable

and I ordered and supervised a withdrawal to a position about 700 yards to the rear, previously selected. This withdrawal, was most effectually covered by the Force armored car under Major Well, and good use was made of the triangle dollies designed by Capt. Murphy. We lost three rounds of shell in this move. Having become careless at a new CP selected in the vicinity of the old gun position, Capt. Speck and I were again pinned to the ground by machine gun fire. I crawled back to the gun position, and by tapping onto the Bugo-Dalirig line we were able to communicate. With Capt. Speck as observer, and firing shrapnel percussion, we soon were able to start a grass fire and burn the machine gunner out. Thereafter we registered both guns in. In the afternoon, with a Pl officer as observer, we fired on and destroyed or disbursed two or three large working parties and ineffectively fired on the cruiser and transports in Macajalar Bay. During the afternoon a part of the Combat Co. 93rd Inf. was sent up as local protection. At about 5:00 PM Lt Col Humber, Force G-2, warned me that the 102nd Division commander reported a serious break-through on our right flank and said that the 102nd Division was falling back to its 3rd line of defense. I immediately decided to move to a position along the road about 800 yards in rear of this 3rd line to support the infantry and act as anti-tank protection, although there were neither enemy nor friendly troops in sight. This was done, and Capt Cosper volunteered to observe from the original CP in order to register on the main demolition for intermittent unobserved fire at night. At dusk he was brought under heavy cross fire by enemy machine guns and was forced to leave his position at this CP far in advance of the infantry line. The gun position was brought under heavy mortar fire and small arms fire at dusk. This ceased at nightfall. At about 7:15 PM Capt Cosper volunteered to again proceed about 1 Km in front of our infantry lines to tow in a much needed car. He did this and returned with the report that the so called 3rd line was devoid of any of our own troops. Unable to phone CPY which was in flames, and being in communication only with the motor pool I determined to move to the Alae position. At Alae junction I met Capt. Fritts and ordered him to emplace the 1st platoon in a previously selected position near Km 76. Lt. Col. Johnston, Force G-4, who was also at Alae, was informed of the situation. I emplaced the 2nd platoon along the Alae-Damilag road and went to bed. During the night General Sharp awakened me and stated that Fritts had been sent on back to Dalirig with the 1st platoon and that I would support the 93rd Inf. while it covered the withdrawal of the remnants of the 102nd Division to Dalirig.

The remainder of the night was quiet. The 93rd Inf. withdrew from the Alae position in perfect order at 6:00 AM, May 4. No enemy was in sight. I withdrew and proceeded by road to Tankulan where, despite the urgings of an Engineer Officer to get across the Mangima Canyon bridge so that he could blow it, I loaded rice, coffee, pineapple juice, sugar, clothing and shoes as well as about 50 new tires on my trucks and then proceeded to Dalirig where the 1st platoon was in position. This platoon had marched two successive nights all night, fought one day and one night, and dug 3 sets of fox holes during that day (May 3). The remainder of the morning we spent in emplacing the 2nd platoon, arranging for food, and issuing the much needed clothing as well as plenty of pineapple juice to the men. The morale was at this time superior- the detachment had not the enemy, had been under fire, and had been able to give more than the enemy gave them. There had been only one wound to date, caused by machine gun ricochet. During the afternoon of May 4 we registered and dug in. Our position was

at 40 yards in rear of the infantry foxholes on a slight reverse slope in excellent defilade. There was nothing to do now until the enemy appeared.

The 5th of May was quiet until about 5:30 PM when troops were seen coming on the road on the opposite side of the canyon. I was sent to the bottom of the canyon with a patrol from my detachment, the men proved to be some of the P. A. still coming back. May 6th was quiet until sunset when enemy artillery registered on the hill mass to our left flank. Enemy artillery was active at the same time on May 7 and all day on May 8 when they fired on something that moved. They were well out of range of my guns which at that time had about a two mile sector to cover. We got in our first rounds on May 8 against 3 enemy tanks and a working party at a demolition across the canyon; one of the tanks was slightly damaged, and no further work was attempted toward repairing the road crater. Capt. Speck was again my observer on the 7, and 8th, Capt Fritts having been taken sick. The CP was an Infantry unit line foxhole. Although several rounds landed in the battery area, and a few pieces of fragments, still hot, flew into the foxholes, no one was hit. Morale was high and the men joking.

COMMENTS

Forward: These comments are furnished to amplify the accounts submitted by the various organizations with such pertinent facts as known by the Force Headquarters in order to present a more complete picture of events as they actually transpired.

History of the Cotabato-Davao Force

- a. The account submitted deals only with the events from the period April 29-May 10. This was in accordance with the orders issued.
- b. From personal observation by members of the Force Staff after the surrender, the road demolitions on the Sayre Highway to the Digos Front were extremely well executed by this Sector. All Bridges (including their pier abutments) were completely destroyed. In addition, many effective road cutters were accomplished. Although the surrender took place on May 10, the road was not ready for vehicular traffic until the end of July.
- c. The impression given by the Sector Commander in his general remarks to the effect that at the time of the surrender, his command was well united with a high morale, ready and capable for continued resistance. On the night of May 8th it was learned that the 103rd Infantry Regiment, which had been given the important mission of covering the Cagayan River Valley approach to Malaybalay, had completely disintegrated. It became imperative therefore to get troops to cover this vital approach into the rear of not only the 102nd Division by the 101st Division as well, particularly as it was learned that a Japanese force of several hundred were making a rapid advance up this valley. It was felt that the Cotabato-Davao Force was the least hard-pressed of all units, orders were issued for the immediate assignment of two rifle companies and one machine gun platoon from this Force to the vicinity of Sanib-Basak. To insure the expediting of this movement the Force G-2 departed General Vachon's Headquarters in order to personally lead the companies to their positions. This order was rescinded when the Force Chief of Staff returning from General Vachon's headquarters the same night, stated that

the desertion rate in the 101st Division was assuming alarming proportions and that they were unable to furnish any men, Further, that it was actually doubtful as to their ability to hold a position astride the Sayre Highway for any great length of time. This serious condition was further verified by conversation of the Force G-2 with the Commander of the Cotabato-Davao Force.

B. 102nd Division

- a. None (See "Remarks" under the Third Philippine Constabulary Regt)

C. 81st Division

- a. This Force was completely disorganized by the Japanese attack from the direction of Malabang.
- b. The highly touted Moro Bolo Battalions proved to be a complete fizzle.

In fact they were a decided detriment to the welfare of the remnants of this Force for they commenced systematic looting and plundering, not of the Japanese forces, but of the few remaining Americans. If no surrender had been ordered, it is extremely doubtful if there would have been any survivors of this force.

D. Agusan Sector

- a. An excellent report. This sector efficiently accomplished all assignments given it.
- b. At the time of the surrender, this sector was stricken with malaria to an alarming degree. About 30 percent of the 81st Infantry Regiment were in the hospital with this malady. No quinine was available. In time malaria alone would have defeated this force.

E. History of the Cebu MP Regiment

- a. From all reports received at this Headquarters, this regiment performed in a sterling manner.
- b. At this date no report has been received from Brig. General Bradford G. Chynoweth, the Sector Commander.

F. History of the Air Corps Troops on Mindanao

- a. None

G. Cotabato Sub-Sector

- a. No comment

H. Digos Sub-Sector

- a. The Digos Front was well fortified. Malaria was a definite problem which was eventually partially solved through the clearing of streams, etc.

I. 62nd Infantry Regiment

a. An excellent account. This organization had a most interesting and varied career.

J. 101st Infantry Regiment

a. No comment.

K. Movement of the Third Philippine Constabulary Regiment

a. In accordance with plan, this regiment was ordered to move by foot to Bukidnon. It never arrived. The reasons why are set forth in this account which brings out many of the universal failings of the Filipino people.

b. Great dependence had been placed on the arrival of this regiment in Bukidnon, for after the reallocation of troops on the Dalirig position there was no Force Reserve which could be used to plug the gaps. It's non-arrival meant that after the debacle and rout at Dalirig there were no troops available to withstand the onslaught of the enemy at Maluko. (There were about 150 officers and men remaining from the 62nd Inf Regt, the 81st Field Artillery Regt., the Force FA Detch., and companies C and F of the 43rd Infantry (FS)).

L. 93rd Infantry Regiment

a. An excellent report.

M. 103rd Infantry Regiment

a. This regiment effected its demolitions in a superior manner. Likewise, under superior leadership, it gave good battle account in the city of Cagayan, it's retirement therefrom being necessitated by the uncovering of it's right flank through withdrawal of the 61st Field Artillery Regiment.

N. 81st Field Artillery Regiment

a. In spite of repeated efforts by this headquarters to have this regiment use it's reserve for a counterattack at Bugo (Force Headquarters was informed by 102nd Division Headquarters that all men had been committed to action), one complete battalion was never engaged.

O. 61st Field Artillery Regiment

a. This regiment voluntarily gave up it's beach positions (regimental order), thereby giving control of the entire beach road from Bugo to Cagayan, to the Japanese without a fight. This uncovered the right of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, causing it's retirement from Cagayan.

b. The most important portion of this regimental sector was the Sayre Highway- and was never covered.

c. Japanese penetration of the Dalirig position was made on the front.

and right flank of this regiment.

P. Zamboanga Sector

a. A very detailed account.

Q. General

The history of the Visayan-Mindanao Force ended with its unconditional surrender on May 10, 1942. It would not be complete without a brief summary of its bill of health on the evening of May 9, 1942, at which time decision to surrender was made. At that time the situation was as follows: North Mindanao Front: During the day of May 9, 1942 the Dalirig Front had totally disintegrated with the remaining fragments of the 62nd Infantry Regt., 81st FA, Force FA Detach, Co's C and F of the 43rd Inf. Regt. (PS) numbering about 150 officers and enlisted men gathered on the Maluko position with their automatic weapons and their supply system broken. The 3rd Philippine Constabulary Regt. had never arrived from Anakan, Agusan so there was no Force Reserve which could be thrown in on this position. At one time during the day it was thought (and plans were being made) to move one battalion of the 93rd Infantry from Sumilao to Maluko, when nightfall came. But an enemy air raid destroyed and wrecked the Force motor transportation so that this movement was physically impossible. Accordingly it meant that May 10th would see the enemy past Maluko and down to about Impasugong, thereby cutting off and isolating the remaining elements of the 93rd Infantry Regt. and the 61st FA Regt. in the Sumilao-Pontian area. On the Cotabato-Davao Front, the statements of the Chief of Staff (see Comments on Cotabato-Davao Force) regarding the conditions there clearly indicated that the 101st Division was likewise in a state of collapse. To climax the situation, information was received at Force Headquarters at Impasugong that the 103rd Infantry had dissolved and that absolutely no troops were available from any front to stop the enemy's flanking movement via the Cagayan River Valley-Basak-Alanib-Malaybalay, into the very heart of Bukidnon.

JOHN L. LEWIS
Lieut. Col. Inf.

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