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THE HISTORY OF
THE NEGRO FORCE
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Prepared by

HISTORICAL DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS NATIONAL DEFENSE FORCES

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F O R E W O R D

Although the Negros Force, USAFFE had contributed little if at all to the initial defense of the Philippines in 1941 - 1942, yet its influence in the guerrilla organization which was later organized in Negros can not be overlooked. The fact is that the key men of the 7th MD Guerrillas were mostly members of the Negros Force. Even for this reason alone, the existence of the Negros Force will more than justify its place in the history of the Defense Campaign of the Philippines in 1941 - 1942.

The source materials used in this study were mostly the personal records of Captain Maximino B de Guzman, formerly Regimental Supply Officer, 75th Infantry, Negros Force and supplemented with the records of the 7th MD Guerrillas and notes taken from personal interviews with officers and men formerly connected with the Negros Force. To those who in one way or other contributed to this study the HISTORICAL DIVISION is deeply grateful.

This account does not purport to be complete and accurate. The HISTORICAL DIVISION, HNDP invites those who are familiar with the facts pertinent to the history of the Negros Force to offer constructive suggestion and for additional information to make it accurate and complete as possible.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the overall defense of the Philippines, the USAFFE at the outbreak of the Pacific War was divided into four defense forces, viz: the North Luzon Force, the South Luzon Force, the Bataan Defense Force and the Visayas-Mindanao Force. In addition, the Harbor Defense Command under Major General George Moore, USA was assigned to guard the strategic Manila Harbor. The defense of Luzon was to hold out in Bataan Peninsula by putting into effect War Department Plan, known as WFO # 3 as soon as the defense of its beaches became untenable. On the other hand, no defense plan was formulated for the southern islands except that of Mindanao Island which "will serve as backdoor of the Philippines, with guerrillas keeping it open," in the event Luzon and Visayas fell to the enemy. Although no definite plan was devised to keep Mindanao open for allied troops in case of reinvasion of the Philippines, the TENTH MILITARY DISTRICT Guerrillas succeeded in keeping it ninety-five per cent free territory during the occupation.

The Visayan group lying between Luzon and Mindanao was of little military importance in the overall defense of the Philippines. This was manifested by the fact that

out of the four PA Reserve Divisions organized and activated in the Visayas prior to Pearl Harbor all except the 61st Division (minus the 61st Infantry Regiment) were either sent to Luzon or Mindanao to reinforce the troops there. The 71st and 91st Divisions (minus one regiment each) were assigned to Luzon, while the 81st Division plus the 93rd, 73rd and 61st Infantry Regiments were sent to Mindanao.

When the war broke on 8 December 1941, the Visayan Islands, namely: Panay, Negros, Cebu, Bohol, Leyte, and Samar were practically without trained and organized troops to defend them. They were left in their own resources to organize and train whatever manpower was available in their respective areas.

Negros Island had contributed the 71st Division minus the 73rd Infantry for the defense of Luzon and the 73rd Infantry for Mindanao. Late in November, 1941 the 61st Infantry arrived in Negros from Iloilo on its way to Mindanao. For a time it garrisoned the western side of the island while the 73rd Infantry the eastern side. When the 61st Infantry left for Mindanao sometime in late December 1941 and followed by the 73rd on 7 January 1942, Negros was left without any organized troops.

Anticipating the withdrawal of the 61st and 73rd Infantry Regiments, Lt. Col. Gabriel Gador, then, Commanding

Officer of the 7th Military District issued orders calling all reservists who had not yet reported for duty. Immediately following the attack of Pearl Harbor, reserve officers mostly school officials and teachers and reservists reported for duty. Out of these officers and men were formed the nucleus of the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments which later composed the Negroes Force.

RECRUITING CENTERS:

Appraised of the limited number of reservists left to form a unit to garrison Negroes, Lt Col Gador radiced Headquarters P.A. for authority to enlist volunteers. Accordingly, on 19 December 1941 HPA granted the request with instruction to train right away all accepted applicants. Pursuant to this instructions Lt Col Gador immediately established seven (7) recruiting centers in strategic places in the 7th Military District and assigned a team of 2 officers to interview, process, and train the volunteers. Two days after the arrival of the Recruiting Team in their station a medical officer followed to conduct physical and medical examination. These centers were as follows:

1. TO SAN CARLOS ELEM. SCHOOL, SAN CARLOS, NEG. OCC.
1st Lt. Damaso Morales, Inf-Res
3rd Lt. Wilfrido Encarnacion, Inf-Res
2. TO BACOLOD HIGH SCHOOL, BACOLOD CITY
1st Lt. Delfin Estelloso, Inf-Res
1st Lt. Eleuterio Bironde, Inf-Res

3. TO PONTEVEDRA ELEM. SCH., PONTEVEDRA, NEG. OCC.
1st Lt. Graciano C. Scliguen, Inf-Res
2nd Lt. Maximino B. de Guzman, Inf-Res
4. TO GUIHULNGAN ELEM. SCH., GUIHULNGAN, NEG. OR.
1st Lt. Venancio Oracion, Inf-Res
1st Lt. Francisco Alcantara, Inf-Res
5. TO DUMAGUETE HIGH SCHOOL, DUMAGUETE NEG. OR.
1st Lt. Hermenegildo Mercado, Inf-Res
1st Lt. Gregorio Larot, Inf-Res
6. TO LARENA ELEM. SCHO., LARENA, NEG. OR.
1st Lt. Felix Estrada, Inf-Res
1st Lt. Nestorio Erum, Inf-Res
7. TO MURCIA ELEM. SCH. MURCIA, NEGROS OCC.
1st Lt. Saturnino Abes, Inf-Res
2nd Lt. Arsenio Castillo, Inf-Res

Far beyond the expectation of Headquarters, 7th MD the youth of Negros flocked by the hundreds to the centers daily. The Municipal Mayors and Chiefs of Police fully cooperated and provided free transportation to the registration centers. Their civil status was not a deterrent factor, as single and married alike volunteered. However, preference was accorded to those without dependents. After a week of recruiting no less than seven thousand volunteers were registered. Many others were turned down on account of educational and physical reasons.

During the period of recruiting each team performed all the manifold duties attendant to every training camp and worked from early dawn to late at night. The volunteers were organized into companies for purposes of messing and training. Each company had a company leader and

assistants from among them. The weekly training program prepared by Headquarters, 7th MD patterned after that of the cadre training schedule were religiously followed. Lectures on enemy information and propaganda, however, were emphasized.

At midnight on 31 December 1941, Headquarters, 7th Military District recalled all recruiting officers and ordered the recruits home with instruction to stand by for future orders. Simultaneously all the recruiting officers reported to Headquarters, 7th Military District at La Carlota, Negros Occidental. As the war progressed many of the recruits were finally inducted into the Negro Force and ninety-five per cent of them joined the 7th Military District Guerrillas under Lt Col Salvador Abcede.

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZATION

The territorial organization of the Negros Force embraced the islands of Negros and Siquijor. Its personnel was a conglomeration of young Filipinos: ROTC cadets, reservists, and civilian volunteers representing the cross-section of the island population such as students, government employees, laborers, farmers, and fishermen. While the bulk of its personnel lacked military training they possessed however the spirit and the will to fight.

On 7 January 1942, Major General William Sharp, CG, Visayan-Mindanao Force ordered Colonel Gabriel Gador then Commanding Officer, 7th Military District to command all inducted forces in Negros and Siquijor Islands. Simultaneously the organized units under the 7th Military District were designated "The Negros Force".

Lt Colonel Gador accelerated the organization and activation of other units in Negros. The 74th Infantry was ordered to move its headquarters to San Jose, La Castellana. On the other hand the ROTC cadets of Silliman University were inducted into the USAFFE and the reservists left over by the 73rd Infantry in Camp Leon Kilat, Tanjay, Oriental Negros were organized into a Provisional Battalion. On 11 January 1942 Lt Col (then Major) Tiburcio Ballesteros

organized the 75th Infantry out of the inducted troops in Oriental Negros pursuant to an order from Lt Col Gador.

A. HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS STAFF:

Initially, the Headquarters of the Negros Force was temporarily housed at the La Carlota Elementary School, La Carlota, Negros Occidental. As of 7 January 1942 the staff of Lt Colonel Gador were as follows:

Commanding Officer	- Lt Col Gabriel Gador, Inf
Adjutant	- 1st Lt Celerino Martinez, Inf (Res)
QM Officer	- Major Tiburcio Ballesteros, QMS
Finance Officer	- Capt Romeo Intengan, FS
Med Officer	- Capt Francisco Serrano, MC (Res)
Engr Officer	- 1st Lt Augusto Alfonso, CE (Res)
Censor Officer	- 1st Lt Eligio Cruz, Inf, (Res)
Detachment Comdr	
Internee Camp	- 1st Lt Fidel Soliven, Jr. OSP

B. FORCE HEADQUARTERS STAFF

About the later part of February, 1942 Colonel Roger Hilsman, USA, was assigned to command the Negros Force vice Lt Col Gabriel Gador who was reassigned in Mindanao. Prior to his appointment to the Negros Command, Colonel Hilsman commander the troops in Digos Sector, Davao during the initial landing of the Japanese in Mindanao in December, 1941. After assuming command, he transferred his Headquarters at La Granja, La Carlota for security reason. Im-

mediately, Colonel Hilsman reorganized his staff as follows:

CO	- Col Roger Hilsman, USA
Ex O	- Maj Licerio Balolong, FC
Adj & G-1	- Capt Sinforoso Menchavez, FA (Res)
G-2	- Capt Francisco Gomez, Inf (Res)
G-3	- Capt Salvador Abcede, Inf
G-4	- Capt Vicente Geroso, QMS (Res)
IG	- Maj Tiburcio Ballesteros, QMS
FO	- Capt Romeo Intengan, FS
Med O	- Capt Francisco Serrano, MC (Res)
Engr O	- 1st Lt Augusto Alfonso, CE (Res)

Sometime in late March, 1942 Colonel Carter McClenan, Cav, USA arrived from Panay. He was assigned as Executive Officer vice Lt Col Licerio Balolong. After the Fall of Bataan the Headquarters was again transferred to Fabrica in Northern Negros. Almost simultaneously Colonel Hilsman was relieved of his command in Negros and assigned in the Staff of Brig Gen Chenoweth in Cebu. Colonel McClenan became the Acting Commander of the Negros Force. When the Sub-Sector plan of defense was put into effect about the middle of April 1942 colonel McClenan reorganized his staff as follows:

CO	- Col Carter McClenan, USA
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Ex O - Lt Col Licerio Balolong, FC
Adj & G-1 - Maj Sinforoso Menchavez, FA (Res)
G-2 & G-3 - Lt Col Eduardo Montilla, FC
G-4 - Maj Vicente Geroso, QMS (Res)
FO - Maj Romeo Intengan, FS
Med O - Capt Francisco Serrano, MC (Res)
Engr O - 1st Lt Augusto Alfonso, CE (Res)
CO 74th Inf - Maj Sam Jones, USA
CO 75th Inf - Lt Col Tiburcio Ballesteros, QMS

The above set-up remained until the surrender of the Negros Force except for the reassumption of command by Colonel Hilsman following his escape from Cebu after the collapse of the Cebu Force.

C. COMPONENTS

Prior to the organization of the sub-sector plan of defense the Negros Force was composed of the Headquarters troops, two infantry regiments, three FC companies and two QM Depots. The 74th Infantry was dispersed in the western side of Negros up to Cadiz in the North and supported by the 1st and 2nd Occidental Negros FC Companies while the 75th Inf was given the mission to defend the eastern side of the island supported by the lone Negros Oriental FC Company. The QM Depots were located in Bacolod City and Dumaguete City to supply the needs of the combat units.

When the defense plan of Negros was changed from

establishing a "little Bataan" in Mt Canlaon in favor of "guerrilla warfare", Negros island was divided into five sectors each to be defended by a reinforced battalion. When the order of surrender came the Negros Force was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th sub-sectors which originally were the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments and the three FC Companies.

THE 74th INFANTRY

The 74th Infantry Regiment was organized and activated after the 71st Division (minus the 73rd Infantry) was dispatched to Luzon early in November, 1941. It was at first contemplated to form the nucleus of the 72nd Division which was to be organized as the war progressed.

The officers were mostly school teachers and officials who received commission in the Reserve Force. Most of them had undergone the required training at the ROSS and SRC while others were civilian volunteers who were commissioned in the Reserve Force by President Quezon as late as March 1942.

The enlisted personnel of this regiment were mostly reservists and civilian volunteers. These reservists were either late in reporting for duty or were excess of the 71st and 72nd Infantry Regiments. The civilian volunteers on the other hand were mostly students, employees and farm-

hands who applied for enlistment at the outbreak of the war.

The 74th Infantry was under the command of Maj Sam C Jones, USA. Maj Jones established his headquarters at Hda San Jose, La Castellana. His staff was composed as follows:

Executive Officer	- Capt Jose Culig, Inf (Res)
Adj & S-1	- 1st Lt Reyes, Inf (Res)
S-2	-
S-3	-
S-4	-
Regt'l Surgeon	-
Regt'l Sig Off	-
CO Hq Bn	-
CO 1st Bn	- Capt Angel Okol, Inf (Res)
CO 2nd Bn	-
CO 3rd Bn	- Major Ernesto Mata, Inf PA

The 74th Infantry was composed of the Headquarters Battalion and three infantry battalions of four companies each. It garrisoned the western side of Negros island extending from the town of Cadiz on the north to Cawayan on the south. Disposing its battalions strategically all along the coastal plain of western Negros, Major Jones located his command post at San Jose, La Castellana, Negros Occidental.

THE 75TH INFANTRY

Recognizing necessity of organizing a force in Oriental Negros out of the troops already inducted there, Headquarters, Negros Force with the approval of Major General William Sharp, activated the 75th Infantry immediately after the 73rd Infantry left for Mindanao on 7 January 1942. Major Tiburcio Ballesteros was dispatched to Oriental Negros by Lt Col Gador to implement the order.

Its personnel came from two sources: the pool of reservists who were waiting for assignment at Camp Leon Kilat, Tanjay, Negros Oriental and the ROTC cadets at Silliman University. The reservists were organized about 4 January 1942 into a Provisional Battalion under 1st Lt. Feliciano Senares. Immediately after its organization Lt Senares moved his command from Tanjay to Vallehermoso, Negros Oriental to conduct further training of his troops.

On the other hand the ROTC cadets of Silliman University having been previously inducted into the USAFFE were waiting for assignments. They were organized by Capt Salvador Abcede and Lt Antonio Romero, Commandant and Asst. Commandant respectively. One of their problems was the lack of commissioned officers to officer the men. This problem was later solved when the 75th Infantry was activated and the ROTC Battalion became one of its components.

On 12 January 1942 Major Ballesteros arrived in Negros Oriental to organize his command. Selecting 1st Lt Hermenegildo Mercado and 2nd Lts Maximino B de Guzman and Uldarico S Baclagon of the provisional battalion to assist him in organizing the 75th Infantry, they left for Dumaguete City where the Regimental Headquarters was temporarily established. On 13 January 1942 Major Ballesteros issued Special Orders Nos. 1 and 2 announcing his assumption of command and designating his Regimental Staff respectively. Initially his staff follows:

Ex O & S-1	- 1st Lt Hermenegildo Mercado
S-2 & S-3	- 2nd Lt Uldarico S Baclagon
S-4	- 2nd Lt Maximino B de Guzman

The organization of the regiment was immediately started. The Provisional Battalion under Lt Seneres was redesignated the 1st Bn and the ROTC cadets under Lt Romero was organized as the 2nd Bn. In the meantime additional officers were assigned to Regimental Headquarters. During a brief interval in late January, 1942 1st Lts Fidel Soliven Jr. and Saturnino Abes and 3rd Lt Hector Rivera reported for duty at Headquarters. About 25 January 1942 the Regimental Staff was reorganized as follows:

Commanding Officer	- Maj Tiburcio Ballesteros
Executive Officer	- 1st Lt Hermenegildo Mercado

Regt'1 S-1 - 1st Lt Saturnino Abes
Regt'1 S-2 - 1st Lt Fidel Soliven Jr.
Regt'1 S-3 - 2nd Lt Uldarico S Baclagon
Regt'1 S-4 - 2nd Lt Maximino B de Guzman

On 1 February 1942 the Regimental Headquarters and the 2nd Battalion left Dumaguete City for Ayungon, Negros Oriental and from there moved to Guihulngan on 5 February. At Guihulngan the training of the 2nd Bn was intensified. In the meantime more officers from Headquarters Negros Force reported for assignment in the 75th Infantry.

Capt Fortunato C Roque originally with the 61st Infantry, 61st Division was reassigned to the 75th Infantry. He was assigned Executive Officer vice 1st Lt Hermenegildo Mercado who was designated CO Hq Bn. Early in February, 1942 1st Lts Antonio U Briones, MC and Valentin Bautista, QMS reported. Lt Briones, MC was assigned Regimental Surgeon while Lt Bautista was designated S-4 vice Lt de Guzman who was assigned Assistant S-2. However, Lt Bautista was reassigned two weeks after and Lt de Guzman resumed his duties as S-4.

At Guihulngan the Headquarters Battalion was organized. Lt Mercado was designated Battalion Commander and 2nd Lt Arsenio Castillo Commanding Officer of the Comat Company. At the same time the Regimental Headquarters was declared a USAFFE Post and for purposes of internal administration the following were designated as post officers:

1st Lt Saturnino A Abes, Inf (Res)	- Post Adjutant
1st Lt Fidel Soliven Jr., OSP (Res)	- Post Provost Off
1st Lt Antonio U Briones, MC (Res)	- Post Med Officer
1st Lt Herminigildo Mercado Inf (Res)	- Post Recreational Off
2nd Lt Loreto Apuhin, Inf (Res)	- Post Summary Off
2nd Lt Maximino B de Guzman, Inf (Res)	- Post Supply Off
3rd Lt Juanito Magbanua (Vol)	- Post Utility Off
3rd Lt Armando P Dabao (Vol)	- Post Transp Off

About the first week of February, 1942 Major Ballesteros was recalled to Headquarters, Negros Force and assigned as Inspector General. Capt Fortunato C Roque, then Executive Officer was designated Acting Regimental Commander. On 15 Feb 1942, Capt Roque for strategic reasons transferred his headquarters to Bogawines, Vallehermoso, Negros Oriental. The reason being that Vallehermoso is the terminus of the La Castellana-Vallehermoso Road which connects Negros Occidental with Negros Oriental at the mid-section Negros island.

At Bogawines, Capt Roque reshuffled his staff. Lt Benjamin Ignacio was appointed CO, 2nd Bn vice Lt Romero who was designated Regt'l S-3. Lt Abes was made Adjutant and Lt Baclagon was assigned S-1. A final realignment of the Staff and Battalion Commanders was made. The headquarters of the 1st Battalion remained in San Carlos and the 2nd Battalion at Guihulngan. Subsequently on 1 March 1942 Major

Ballesteros was relieved by Lt Col Eduardo Montilla as Inspector General and was reverted to his position as CO, 75th Infantry.

As of March, 1942 the Staff and Battalion Commanders of the 75th Infantry follows:

Commanding Officer	- Maj Tiburcio Ballesteros
Executive Officer	- Capt Fortunato C Roque
Adjutant	- 1st Lt Saturnino Abes
Regimental S-1	- 2nd Lt Uldarico S Baclagon
Regimental S-2	- 1st Lt Fidel Soliven Jr.
Asst. Regimental S-2	- 3rd Lt Ramon Nolan
Regimental S-3	- 2nd Lt Antonio Romero
Asst Regimental S-3	- 3rd Lt Felipe Belzunce
Regimental S-4	- 2nd Lt Maximino B de Guzman
Regimental Surgeon	- 1st Lt Antonio Briones
Regimental Sig Off	- 3rd Lt Juanito Magbanua
CO, Hq Battalion	- 1st Lt Hermenegildo Mercado
CO, 1st Battalion	- 1st Lt Feliciano Seneres
CO, 2nd Battalion	- 1st Lt Benjamin Ignacio

3. PC COMPANIES

In addition to the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments as combat elements of the Negros Force were three PC Companies. The Occidental Negros PC Companies were under Lt Col Eduardo Montilla Provincial Commander at the start of the war. The

1st PC Company in Fabrica was under Capt Pulong Arpa while the 2nd PC Company in Isabela was under 1st Lt Primo Manuel. A detachment composed of fifty-five soldiers under 1st Lt. Fidel Soliven Jr. and later under 1st Lt Dominador Lorenzo was assigned to the Internees Camp at Bacolod and later transferred at Isabela. On the other hand the Oriental Negros PC Company under Major Licerio Balolong was at Tanjay directly under the command of Capt Antonio Sabarre. They maintained peace and order and assisted the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments in apprehending fifth column suspects.

After their induction into the USAFFE they were made part of the Negros Force. As the sub-sector plan of defense for Negros was adopted, these PC soldiers were attached to the different sub-sectors as key men.

4. THE QM DEPOTS

Supply was a serious problem from the start. Whatever supplies the Negros Force needed has to be produced locally. In order to facilitate the procurement and assume the sufficiency of supplies QM Depots were organized and activated.

The Bacolod QM Depot was organized and activated in Bacolod City late in December 1941 to supply the needs of the 74th Infantry. Major Juan Vidamo, QMS, PA, was its Commanding Officer and Capt Vicente Macairan as Assistant. On the other hand the QM Sub-Depot at Dumaguete originally under the 81st Division supplied the needs of the 75th In-

fantry. Captain John Macon, Inf, USA, was the Commanding Officer.

Besides food and QM supplies the QM Depots were responsible for the procurement of motor vehicles and fuel. In spite of the limited resources available in Negroes at the time the QM Depots did a good job of filling up the needs of the Negroes Force.

CHAPTER III

NEGROS FORCE PREPARED FOR THE WORSE

A. MT CANLAON - THE LITTLE BATAAN

The success of the Bataan garrison to hold out at the early stage of the war encouraged Col Hilsman and his staff to make Mt Canlaon the "Little Bataan" of Negros Island. Late in February 1942, plans were devised to prepare Mt. Canlaon an impregnable fortress like Bataan Peninsula. After surveying the area it was discovered that it can only be approached on three sides the north being impenetrable. Areas for supply depots and warehouses were located and the defensive areas of the 74th and 75th Regiments designated. The new defense plan was implemented right away.

Simultaneously the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments started the preparation of their defense lines in Mt. Canlaon area. The 74th Infantry took the West and Southwestern portion while the 75th took the East and Southeastern slopes of the mountain. Each battalion was assigned its sector in the regimental area and the companies in turn were allocated their position in the battalion area. After a month of intensive preparation Mt Canlaon became fully prepared for the enemy.

While the Engineers were occupied with the construction of barracks and warehouses for storage of supplies, the Signal Corps were rushing the communication lines in and

around the vicinity of Mt Canlaon. On the other hand the Quartermaster Service were busy stocking food supplies. By late March, 1942 the preparation in Mt Canlaon was almost complete except for the required quantity of food supplies to last 6 months.

The Mt Canlaon bastion now fittingly captioned the "Little Bataan" gave the men the feeling of sufficient security which increased their morale. It was not uncommon to hear the men say "Let the dirty Japs come and get us." "Like Bataan, Canlaon will be their graveyard. Lulled under the protecting impregnableness of Mt Canlaon, their own men made fortress the officers and men devoted themselves to procuring more supplies and ammunitions.

B. AMMUNITION AND SUPPLY PROBLEMS

To augment the limited ammunition available for the troops, salvage crews was organized and formed into teams early in February, 1942, to retrieve the ammunition that went to the bottom of Maricalum Bay in Southern Negros with the SS Pansy which was sank by Japanese planes. Fortunately, more than half of the salvage ammunition were found serviceable which were divided between the two regiments.

Adding to their limited stock of hand grenades the 74th Infantry initiated the manufacture of Molotov cocktail out of native materials. On the other hand the 75th Infantry

opened and ordnance shop for the repair of machine guns and rifles at the San Carlos Sugar Central machinery shop, thus making possible the repair of many defective Enfields and old Springfields.

The QM Depots in Bacolod and Dumaguete were responsible in supplying the combat units with supplies as well as stocking food for future use. They hired cutters and tailors to sew EM's uniform, shoemakers to make and repair shoes, contracted vegetable and fish vendors and engaged in a wholesale production of tapa and dried fish, etc.

C. PRESIDENT QUEZON IN NEGROS

On 5 March 1942, the MS Princess of Negros arrived in San Carlos from Corregidor with President Quezon and party on board. Among those in his party were members of his immediate family. Vice President Sergio Osmena, Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos, Major General Basilio J Valdez and Colonels Manuel Nieto and Andres Soriano. The arrival of President Quezon in Negros was a blessing to the Negros Force as he settled the problem of volunteer officers regarding their commission in the Army. Due to the lack of commissioned officers in Negros when the war broke, Headquarters, Negros Force appointed about fifty professionals and 1st and 2nd Class ROTC cadets of Silliman University as 3rd Lt (Volunteer). Actually performing their duties as commissioned officers, these volunteer officers were refused payment of

their salary by the Finance Officer on the ground that their appointment lacked Presidential authority. When President Quezon arrived, this question was brought out to his attention. He immediately issued orders commissioning all the volunteer officers, Third Lieutenant in the Reserve Force, Philippine Army.

For the duration of President Quezon's stay in Negros it became the seat of the Commonwealth Government in the field. To forestall any attempt by fifth-column to spy on his movements the military and civil government officials took special care in covering and camouflaging his travels. Further precaution was maintained to safeguard the President by assigning a platoon of infantry as his honor guard and to see to it that any hacienda which he chose to stay and rest was provided with a road exit.

D. JAPANESE CRUISERS ATTACKED NEGROS

On or about 14 March 1942 two Japanese men-of-war appeared from the northern entrance of Tanon Strait. Their appearance caused so much panic among civilians and apprehension among the soldiers. After cruising leisurely in the narrow strait they fired about 20 shells on the shores of Negros probing perhaps shore batteries. Unfortunately the Negros Force lacked batteries. On reaching about a mile distant from San Carlos proper the cruisers slowed down and directed their course toward the Municipal Wharf. They peppered

the wharf and vicinity with machine gun fire. Reaching about 400 yards from the outer tip of the wharf the Japanese lowered several life boats with sailors.

In the meanwhile the troops of the 1st Bn, 75th Infantry under 1st Lt Feliciano Seneres, then garrisoning San Carlos took their assigned battle positions along the beach of San Carlos. The 2nd Bn, 75th Infantry, who were at the time preparing their defensive position in Mt Canlaon was ordered by Lt Col Ballesteros to rush down in support of the 1st Bn. The 74th Infantry and FC Companies were also alerted for any possible landing in their sector and to support the 75th Inf if necessary.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the Japanese did not make any landing. As the Japanese paddled toward the wharf the men covering the beach, especially those assigned to guard the wharf were itching for a fight but were restraint by their officers. As the Japanese withdrew towing the M.S. Princess of Negros they were terribly disappointed. As the 2nd Bn reached San Carlos from Mt. Canlaon the Japanese destroyers were already turning away from San Carlos.

For exemplary behaviour, coolness and courage during this naval attack against San Carlos the officers and men of the 75th Infantry Regiment were commended by CO, Negros Force.

On 29 March 1942, another Japanese destroyer appeared in the vicinity of Dumaguete and cruised northward on Tannon Strait. As it moved leisurely it fired several salvos towards Dumaguete, Sibulan, and Ayuqitan, Negros Oriental. The "C" Co, 1st Bn, 75th Infantry and the PC Detachment in Dumaguete were alerted. The cruiser was perhaps probing only the coastal defenses of the area but found nothing. Lt M B de Guzman, then, convoying supplies from Dumaguete sent a flash to CO, 75th Infantry regarding the presence of the enemy vessel in the area. After cruising for about an hour along the strait and discovered no hostile troops the destroyer turned back toward Mindanao Sea.

On account of the increasing enemy activity in the waters surrounding Negros Island which pointed to suspicion, President Quezon and party left Negros for Mindanao just before the fall of Bataan.

As Bataan was nearing its end the troops in Negros viewed with skepticism the feasibility of continuing the idea of staging a final stand in Mt Canlaon. When the "Voice of Freedom" finally announced that Bataan surrendered the Negros troops felt down-hearted not so much for themselves but for the fate of their brothers in-arm in Bataan.

CHAPTER IV

NEGROS PREPARED FOR GUERRILLA WARFARE

A. NEGROS DIVIDED INTO SUB-SECTORS

The failure of the gallant Bataan garrison to hold out against a superior enemy with an air dominance proved to the military leaders of Negros the vulnerability of Mt Canlaon. With approximately two thousand rifle and few machine guns and an average of 40 rounds of ammunition available to each gun, Canlaon will only prove to be the unhappy graveyard for the Negros Force. Hence, a plan was conceived jointly by Majors Salvador Abcede and Francisco Gomez, then G-3 and G-2 respectively of the Negros Force to prepare Negros Island for a protracted guerrilla warfare against the enemy in case of invasion.

Immediately after the fall of Bataan the defensive positions which had been prepared thoroughly in Mt Canlaon was abandoned and all stock of supplies were brought to the low land. At about this time, Colonel Hilsman was called to Cebu and assigned as Chief of Staff of General Chenoweth, the Commanding General of the Visayan Force. Colonel Carter McClenan, Executive Officer became Acting Commander. As Majors Abcede and Gomez perfected their plan of guerrilla warfare, the same was submitted for discussion about 13 April 1942 in a Staff Conference presided by Colonel McClenan. As envisaged in the new defense plan, the Negros Force will dis-

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perse throughout the island and harass the Japanese from the rear in case of landing. To effect this plan Negros will be divided into sub-sectors and each sub-sector will be garrisoned. Simultaneously with the adaption and implementation of the sub-sector plan of defense, the headquarters of the Negros Force was transferred to Fabrica, Negros Occidental. To prevent interference with the operational activities of the battalions the Commanding Officer of the 74th and 75th Infantry Regiments were deprived of tactical control of their respective battalions. However, the administration of their personnel remained under their control. The Regimental Staff Officers were either reassigned to the Sub-Sector headquarters or attached to the headquarters of the Negros Forces.

The sub-sector plan calls for the island of Negros to be divided into five sectors each sub-sector with a definite boundary line. In each sub-Sector a reinforced battalion of infantry was assigned to garrison it. In the final division of Negros Island the area of each sub-sector follows:

The First Sub-Sector comprising the towns of Murcia, Talisey, Silay, Manapla, Victorias, Saravia, and the City of Bacolod was placed under the 3rd Bn, 74th Infantry under the command of Major Ernesto Mata. The CP of Major Mata was at Murcia, Negros Occidental.

The Second Sub-Sector comprising the towns of Bago, Pulupandan, Villadolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, La Carlota and La Castellana was placed under the 1st Bn, 74th Infantry under the command of Major Francisco Gomez. The CP was at Bacolod Air Pool, Negros Occidental.

The Third Sub-Sector comprising the towns of San Carlos, Negros Occidental, Vallehermoso, Guihulngan, La Libertad, Jimalalud, Tayasan, Ayungon, Manjuyod, Bais, Tanjay, Aguqyitan, Sibulan, Dumaguete, Luzuriaga, Bacong, Dawin, Zamboanguita, Siaton, Tolong, and the sub-provinces of Siquijor was placed under the 2nd Bn, 75th Infantry under the command of Major Fortunato C Roque. The CP was located at Bagowinis, Vallehermoso, Negros Oriental.

The Fourth Sub-Sector comprising the towns of Cadiz, Escalante, Calatrava, Sagay, and Fabrica was placed under the 1st Bn, 75th Infantry under the command of Major Pulong Arpa. The CP was at Fabrica, Negros Occidental.

The Fifth Sub-sector comprising the towns of Isabela, Hinigaran, Binalbagan, Himamaylan, Ilog, Kabankalan, and Cauayan was placed under the 2nd Bn, 74th Infantry under the command of Major Salvador Abcede. The CP was located at Isabela, Negros Occidental.

Under this new defense set-up the Negros troops although offering less or no resistance at all in case of enemy landing will prove costly to the enemy because they

will be hit from behind. The effectiveness of this defense system was later demonstrated by the 7th MD guerrillas under Lt Col Salvador Abcede, a former sub-sector commander and one of those who originally conceived and initiated the plan.

For the defense of their particular sub-sector each sub-sector commander stationed a platoon or company in strategic places of his sector. If the enemy attempts any beach landing they will be allowed without a fight but once inland they will be attacked or ambushed. Under this system of warfare our limited supply of ammunition can be used to advantage with more effect.

Each sub-sector was independent of the others. For their supplies the QM Depot at Bacolod and Sub-QM Depot at Dumaguete continued to supply their needs. To augment the meager supply from the QM Depots, the sub-sector commanders were authorized to purchase food supplies such as fish, meat and vegetables in open market in the amount of 40 centavos per man per day.

B. FIRST SUB-SECTOR

The First Sub-sectpr comprised the most thickly populated and the richest area of Negros Island. As most of the largest sugar centrals in Negros were located in this area, it was fittingly given the appellation of "guardian angel" of the Negros sugar bowl.

Garrisoning this area was originally the 3rd Bn, 74th Infantry under Major Ernesto Mata, PA. Major Mata is a regular officer and a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, class 1937. As a man and a leader he is characterized as dominating allowing no "ifs" and "buts" among his subordinates. With him as the towering figure in the 1st sub-sector the area seem secured from the enemy.

Assisting Major Mata were his sub-sector staff and line officers. Although most of his officers were ill prepared as they lack the necessary training for effective combat and to die for the cause. The 1st sub-sector was one of the most active sub-sector before surrender.

The following were Major Mata's staff and line officers:

Executive Officer	- Captain Alfredo Solis
S-1 & Adj.	- Captain Alfredo Solis
S-2	- Captain Fidel Soliven Jr.
S-3	- 2nd Lt Amadeo Abellana
S-4	- Captain Restituto Tejing
CO Hq Co	- 2nd Lt Amadeo Abellana
JO	-
JO	-
JO	-
CO "I" Co	- 1st Lt Jose Sadol
Ex O	-
JO	- 3rd Lt Justo Bravo

JO -
JO -
CO "K" Co - 1st Lt Gregorio Cafe
EX O - 1st Lt Catalino G_enes
JO - 1st Lt Felizardo Martelino
JO - 1st Lt Jose Villar
JO - 3rd Lt Ignacio
CO "L" Co - 2nd Lt Jimenez
EX O - 3rd Lt Batobato
JO - 3rd Lt Cabalsa
JO -
CO "M" Co - 3rd Lt Mancao
EX O - 3rd Lt Ramiro Kilayko
JO -
JO -
JO -

C. SECOND SUB-SECTOR

The Second Sub-sector embraced the mid-section of the Province of Negros Occidental. The wealth of this area is both sugar and rice with fishing as an auxiliary occupation of the people. Compare with the other sub-sectors its terrain was to its disadvantage as the area is flat and extended far to the interior from the coast. It is therefore easily exposed against enemy attack.

Assigned in this sub-sector was the 1st Bn, 74th Infantry. Major Francisco Gomez, formerly G-2, Negros Force was in command. A graduate of the College of Agriculture, UP he was commissioned in the Reserve Force, Philippine Army. As a soldier and leader he is characterized as firm. Assisting Major Gomez were the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 74th Infantry. In a way, he is not very intimate with most of his officers, having been identified with the Headquarters, Negros Force. Several of his officers came from the Philippine Scouts who were commissioned in the Reserve Force, PA. Major Gomez has the distinction of being the only sub-sector commander who is a native of Negros Island and therefore familiar with its territory and people. The 2nd Sub-Sector area became later one of the hottest spots of guerrilla activities in the whole island of Negros.

The following composed Major Gomez sub-sector staff and line of officers:

Ex O	- Capt Angel Okol
S-1 & Adj.	- 1st Lt Reyes
S-2	-
S-3	-
S-4	-
CO "HQ" Co	-

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ambuscade against the enemy. This was later supported by an attack against the Japanese early in June, 1942 by 3rd Sub-sector troops who did not surrender under Cpl Puring. As a result of this advantageous terrain the troops of the 3rd sub-sector were very confident that they can hold their area free from the enemy.

To garrison this sub-sector the 2nd Bn, 75th Infantry was assigned. Major Fortunato C Roque, then Executive Officer, 75th Infantry was in command. Major Roque before the war was in the faculty of the Philippine Military Academy. He is a graduate of the UP and received his commission in the Regular Force, PA as First Lieutenant in 1938. He is very understanding although firm as a leader. He gained the support and loyalty of his officers and men by his fatherly attitude and considerate nature. As the highest military leader in Oriental Negros during those sub-sector days he won many supporters and friends among the elite of the province.

Assisting Major Roque in his command function were the original staff officers of the 75th Infantry. This sub-sector has the unique distinction of having 3 regular officers in its rosters of officers, all others sub-sectors having only one or none at all. Although most of its commissioned officers were young men mostly ROTC cadets from the Silliman University, their youth and vitality more than make up for

their lack of experience. Before the surrender of Negros Force, the 3rd sub-sector was kept busy screening evacuees and stragglers from Cebu and Luzon who found their way to Negros.

The following were Major Roque's staff and line Officers:

- EX O - Capt Feliciano Seneres
- S-1 & Adj - Capt Hilario Parnas
- S-2 - 1st Lt Uldarico S Baclagon
- S-3 - 1st Lt Antonio Romero
- Asst S-3 - 2nd Lt Felipe Banzunc
- S-4 - 1st Lt Maximino B de Guzman
- Asst S-4 - 3rd Lt Catalino Javellana
- Bn Surgeon - Capt Antonio U Briones
- CO Combat Co - 1st Lt Arsenio Castillo
- CO Hq Co - Capt Hermenegildo Mercado
- JO - 2nd Lt Armando Dabao
- JO - 2nd Lt Juanito Magbanua
- JO - 2nd Lt
- CO "E" Co - 1st Lt Francisco Alcantara
- EX O - 2nd Lt Florentino N Narrajos
- JO -
- JO -
- JO -

CO "G" Co - 1st Lt Eduardo Cruz
Ex O - 3rd Lt Ernesto Torejon
JO -
JO -
JO -
CO "H" Co - 3rd Lt Conrado Leyva
Ex O - 3rd Felix Lagrito
JO -
JO -
JO -

E. FOURTH SUB-SECTOR

The Fourth Sub-sector occupied the area from Calatrava to Cadiz, Negros Occidental. It is a rugged country with the world famous Fabrica Saw Mill, the only focal point of interest in the area. For guerrilla warfare the area has an advantage over the other sub-sectors because of its compactness and rugged terrain and the limitless vegetation of the mountain of Fabrica. Its irregular coast lines also offers natural defensive positions to the troops in case of beach landing in the area.

Garrisoning this area was the 1st Bn, 75th Infantry. Major Pullong Arpa, a graduate of the Philippine Constabulary Academy and a veteran Constabular Officer was in command. He was assisted by the staff officers of 1st Bn, 75th Infantry who were mostly school teachers commissioned in the

Reserve Force. Most of his Junior Officers were also young, mostly ROTC cadets from Silliman University who were commissioned in the Reserve Force after December 1941. Their enthusiasm and youthful vitality more than compensated for their inexperience. Major Arpa's personal hold over this command was mainly responsible for the intact surrender of his unit, except "C" Co under Capt Felix Estrada, a former instructor of the Oriental Negros High School, who as a unit defied the surrender order.

The following composed Major Arpa's sub-sector staff and line officers:

Executive Officer	- 1st Lt Benjamin Ignacio
S-1 & Adj	- 1st Lt Delfin Estaloso
S-2	- 2nd Lt Loreto Apuhin
Asst S-2	- 3rd Lt Hector Rivera
S-3	- 2nd Lt Alfredo Lumang
S-4	- 3rd Lt Robustiano Dejaresco
CO Combat Co	- 3rd Lt Louis Alba
CO Hq Co	- 1st Lt Graciano Soliguén
JO	- 3rd Lt Fructuoso Lumbre
JO	-
JO	-
CO "A" Co	- 1st Lt Demaso Morales
Ex O	- 3rd Lt Wilfrido Encarnacion

JO -
JO -
JO -
CO "B" Co - 1st Lt Venancio Oracion
Ex O - 1st Lt Nestorio Erum
JO -
JO -
JO -
CO "C" Co - 1st Lt Felix Estrada
Ex O - 3rd Lt Amado Tambo
JO -
JO -
JO -
CO "D" Co - 1st Lt Gregorio Larot
Ex O - 3rd Lt Rustico Paralejas
JO -
JO -
JO -

F. FIFTH SUB-SECTOR

The Fifth Sub-sector embraced all the area south of the Second Sub-sector as far south as the towns of Asia and Sepalay in Southern Negros Occidental. It garrisoned the biggest and most vegetated area in the entire island. It possessed a natural advantage for guerrilla warfare as its coast lines and interior terrain is rugged and mountainous.

This natural advantage was perhaps one of the principal reasons why this area was considered as the cradle of the guerrilla resistance movement in Negros.

Assigned in this sub-sector was the 2nd Bn, 74th Infantry. Major Salvador Abcede, formerly G-3, Negros Force and later Commanding Officer 7th MD guerrillas was in command. A regular officer and formerly Commandant of Cadets at Silliman University before the war he brought with him a wealth of experience in the military service. His assignment as Commanding Officer of the Fifth Sub-sector proved to be blessing in the future guerrilla resistance movement in Negros. Being one of the original proponent of the sub-sector, idea, made used of the plan immediately after surrender.

Major Abcede was fortunate in having under him loyal command. When the order of surrender came Major Abcede gave his officers and men the option to surrender or follow him to the hills. Only one of his officers did not follow him. This unprecedented loyalty gave Major Abcede more inspiration to execute his idea of guerrilla warfare as he and Major Gomez conceived early in April 1942. The success of the 7th MD guerrillas against the enemy and its splendid record of resistance during the occupation is a legacy which Major Abcede and his command can well be proud of

The following composed Major Abcede's sub-sector
staff and line officers:

Ex O	- Capt Angel Okol
S-1 & Adj	-
S-2	- Lt Jesus Nolan
S-3	-
S-4	- Lt Pablo Samonte
CO Hq Co	- Capt Jorge Madamba
Demolition & Tpr O	- Lt Jaime Dacanay
CO PC Det	- Lt Salvador Z Carbonell
Surgeons	- Capt Benjamin Zaragosa Capt Isidro Bantug
CO "E" Co	- Lt Filemon Cortes
JO	- Lt Ruben Abao
JO	- Lt Vicente Mabugat
JO	- Lt Jaime Presbitero
CO "F" Co	- Lt Vicente Creo
Ex O	-
JO	- Lt Antonio Arrieta
JO	- Lt Filemon Cariaga
JO	-
CO "G" Co	- Lt Armando Camagon
JO	-
JO	- Lt Benjamin Faculan
JO	- Lt Rolando Espinos

CO "H" Co - Lt Ricardo Espinosa
Ex O -
JO - Lt Leon Narag
JO - Lt Eliseo Sagun
JO - Lt Juan Locsin

As days passed after the Japanese started their all-out offensive through Bataan and Mindanao refugees and soldiers continuously arrived in Negros riding in small boats. Their tales of Japanese atrocities were shocking. To prevent infiltration of enemy soldiers and spies every incoming refugee was investigated and screened. The soldiers from Luzon, Cebu, Panay and Mindanao who found their way to Negros joined the Negros forces.

The civilian population was filled with speculation as to what course of action the high command of the United States would take in case of enemy landing. The soldiers on the other hand were decided to fight to the bitter end.

As the "Voice of Freedom" announced the fall of Corregidor the spirit of the troops began to falter, but they continued to resist in their own way. The final blow fell on

CHAPTER V

THE SURRENDER

After Bataan surrendered the seas that surround the Visayan islands were alived with enemy activities. The Japs had landed in Cebu and Panay, boxing Negros in both sides. Weeks passed but still Negros was avoided in spite of Japanese men of war cruising daily the waters that surrounded Negros. For weeks until the Order of Surrender was issued the troops stayed on their post.

As days passed after the Japanese started their simultaneous offensive in Cebu, Panay and Mindanao refugees and soldiers continuously arrived in Negros riding in small bancas. Their tales of Japanese atrocities were sickening. To prevent infiltration of fifth columns and spies every incoming refugee was investigated and screened. The soldiers from Luzon, Cebu, Panay and Mindanao who found their way in Negros joined the Negros Force.

The civilian population was alived with speculation as to what course of action the high command of the Negros Force would take in case of enemy landing. The soldiers on the other hand were decided to fight to bitter end.

As the "Voice of Freedom" announced the fall of Corregidor the spirit of the troops became dimmer, but they continued to remain in their post. But the final blow fell on

them as they heard in the radio the order to surrender from Lt Gen Jonathan Wainwright, CG, USAFIP, excerpts of which follows:

"SUBJECT: Surrender

"TO : William F Sharp
Commander, Visayas and Mindanao Forces

"MESSAGE: To fully stop further useless sacrifice of lives in the fortified islands of Manila Bay, yesterday I tendered to General Homma the surrender of the fortified islands. General Homma refused to accept the surrender unless I include the forces under your command. After leaving General Homma with no agreement between us I decided to accept, in the name of humanity, his proposal and tendered at midnight, May 6-7, 1942, to the senior officer of the Japanese forces in Corregidor the formal surrender of all American and Philippine troops.... You will therefore be guided accordingly, and will surrender all troops under your command.....

"This decision on my part, you will understand, was forced upon by circumstances beyond my control.

".....Repeat contents of this radio to General MacArthur.

"Failure to carry out the instruction can have only the most disastrous results. Colonel Nakar, please listen (Nakar was still furiously resisting the

enemy in Northern Luzon)...."

In compliance with Gen Wainwright's order of surrender Gen Sharp issued his order of surrender. As his orders were heard by radio both civilians and soldiers in Negros took it with persimism, as they had faith in the sub-sector set-up of guerrilla warfare against the enemy under the able supervision and encouragement of Col Carter McClean, then Acting CO of the Negros Force. When the Cebu Force, however capitulated to the enemy, Col Hilsman, then Chief of Staff of General Chenoweth returned to Negros and once more assumed command of the Negros Force. Immediately thereafter talks of surrender became apparent. Colonel Hilsman was rather a "nervous wreck" when he came over from Cebu, but still had the temerity to say to civil officials "If there are only 20,000 Japanese to land in Negros, I'll meet them on the beach." He met Japanese later, with a white flag. General Wainwright's message had something to do with his decision. In order not to prevent an open mutiny by issuing a blunt order of surrender, Col Hilsman first called a conference among his staff and sub-sector commanders, pointing out to them the wisdom of surrender.

A. COLONEL VALERIANO ARRIVED - MURDERED.

In the meantime on 10 May 1942, a native boat with four prominent passengers landed in San Carlos, Negros Occidental from Cebu. The party each armed with US pistols

and bundles of Japanese leaflets intended for distribution in Negros was composed of Col Benito Valeriano, formerly PC Inspector for Visayas, Jose Osmena, son of President Osmena, Atty Ramon Severino, one time Governor of Negros Occidental and Atty Veloso of Cebu.

In a conference held the following day with Colonel McClenan representing Colonel Hilsman, Colonel Valeriano and party admitted that they were personal envoys of Lt Col. S Kawakami the Japanese Military Administrator for the Visayas to arrange with the commander of the Negros Force the following:

1. The unconditional surrender of the Negros Force.
2. The immediate establishment of the civil government.
3. The release of the Japanese prisoners.

No decision was reached in the conference. Colonel McClenan assured Colonel Valeriano that he will convey to Col Hilsman the points raised in the conference. In the meantime, while waiting for the decision of Col Hilsman, Col Valeriano and party were housed in the palatial mansion of Don Vicente Lopez at Bogawines, Vallehermoso, Negros Oriental. For reasons of security they were guarded.

On 12 May 1942 just as the sun had risen from the horizon, Colonel Valeriano and his companions were shot in cold blood by their guard, Cpl Justo M Lusoc. In a signed confession Cpl Lusoc assumed full responsibility of his

acts and justified his action on the belief that Col Valeriano and companions were Filipino spies working for the Japanese.

To appease the Japanese particularly Lt Col Kawakami, Col Hilsman penned the following letter to explain the circumstances that led to the killing of Colonel Valeriano and his companions.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES
PHILIPPINE ARMY

UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN THE FAR EAST
HEADQUARTERS NEGROS FORCE

May 12, 1942

Lt. Col. S Kawakami
Director
Japanese Military Administration
District of Visayas

Sir:

It is with deepest regret that I have to inform you of the death by murder of Col. Valeriano, Mr. Osmena, Mr. Veloso and Mr. Severino your emissaries, who arrived here two days ago.

Upon their arrival here they were placed in protective custody by the bearer of this letter, Major Roque, the commander of the sector in which they landed. This action was taken to prevent possible violence to the persons of the emissaries.

There is also enclosed a copy of the telegraphic instructions issued by me to all subordinate commanders of the Negros Sector directing that all hostilities cease and that NO action be taken against the Japanese Imperial Forces. There is also enclosed copies of telegrams exchanged between me and Major Roque on the evening of May 11th in which the return to Cebu of Col. Valeriano and his party was authorized by me.

According to the report just received at this Headquarters, Col. Valeriano and his three associate emissaries were murdered at 6:45 AM, May 12, 1942 by Corporal Justo M. Lusoc who was detailed to guard and protect them.

No satisfactory accounting for this murder can be made. It is assumed that Corporal Justo M. Lusoc became insane just prior to the commission of the act. Before this occurred Corporal Lusoc had been known as a reliable trustworthy soldier.

I can not express the deep regret which I feel at this most unfortunate occurrence for which a member of my command is responsible.

In order to give a prompt indication of my good faith in this matter, I am sending Corporal Lusoc to you under guard for such action as you consider advisable.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ Roger Hilsman
/t/ ROGER HILSMAN
Colonel, Inf, USA
Commanding

To show his sincerity and escape responsibility he surrendered Cpl Justo Lusoc to the Japanese. On 13 May 1942, Major Fortunato C Roque, CO 3rd Sub-sector was ordered to deliver the letter and Cpl Lusoc to the Japanese in Cebu City. On 14 May 1942 Major Roque returned from Cebu minus Cpl Lusoc.

On 18 May 1942, the representative of General Sharpe arrived in Negros to confirm the order of surrender. On 19 May 1942, Col Hilsman wired Colonel Christie in Panay:

"REGARDLESS OF LEGALITY OF WAINWRIGHT'S SURRENDER FACT REMAINS THAT SHARPE COMMANDING VISAYAS DID SURRENDER ALL VISAYAS WHEN THAT SURRENDER IS CONFIRMED BY SHARPE'S STAFF OFFICER WE MUST SURRENDER OR BE CLASSIFIED AS DESERTERS BY OUR OWN COUNTRY AND AS OUTLAWS BY INTERNATIONAL LAW STOP I HAVE COPY OF RULES OF LAND WARFARE."

From this telegram it was apparent that Col Hilsman was decided to surrender the Negros Force. On 19-20 May 1942 Col Hilsman ordered his sub-sector commanders to be continuously in touch with their command. Meanwhile, Headquarters Negros Force was preparing and mimeographing the order for the surrender of the Negros Force. On the afternoon and night of 20 May 1942, the representatives of Col Hilsman spread out to the headquarters of the sub-sectors armed with the copy of the surrender order. Excerpts of which follows:

"

"3. FAILURE to surrender classified you as:

a. DESERTER by Philippine and US Govt.

PENALTY - DEATH

b. OUTLAW by Imperial Japanese Army

PENALTY - DEATH

"4. By terms of the agreement the Imperial Army has been furnished: -

a. Your name and home address

b. Your present location

c. The arms and ammunition you have

"5. By surrendering you will draw full pay until you are mustered out of the service and you will be entitled to all bonus and insurance privileges from the USAFFE. You will also be recognized as an HONORABLE prisoner of war by the Philippine Government, the USAFFE and by the Imperial Japanese Army.

x x x x x x x

"8. By complying with these orders you will SAVE YOUR HONOR, YOUR LIFE AND ASSURE safety of your family and friends.

Meanwhile the grapevine was working fast. The officers and men in the field became uneasy. Not verse in International Law they knew little or nothing of the Rules of Land Warfare. What they very well know was that to surrender means eternal damnation of their integrity as soldiers and a humiliation to the social prestige of their families. But worse still is that to surrender to the Japanese means certain death - slow death in a Jap Prisoner of War Camp. In the end, therefore, the bulk of the Negroes Force chose death by fighting. They escaped to the hills even before the first complement of Japanese soldiers arrived at Banago Wharf, Bacolod City, on 21 May 1942.

Supplementary to the order of surrender an instruction was issued by Colonel Hilsman effecting an orderly manner of surrender. It required each sub-sector commander

to assemble either at Camp Magallon or at Camp Fabrica, in Occidental Negros where the Japanese will receive the surrendering troops.

B. CONFUSION- DEFIANCE

General Wainwright's surrender order caused a repercussion and divided the officers and men into two camps. The bone of contention was the legality of his order. A vast majority of the troops believed the order to be illegal, on the ground that it was forced upon him by the Japanese. The rest believed otherwise and justifying further the wisdom of surrendering on the futility of further resistance as well as on humanitarian ground.

The legality of the order was tested when Colonel Hilsman issued his order of surrender. One of the first incidences that occurred was the hoisting of the white flag at Banago wharf in Bacolod city. Capt Fidel Soliven, S-2 of the 1st Sub-sector ordered it pulled down. When another white flag was again hoisted Major Ernesto Mata, CO of the 1st Sub-sector went to Banago Wharf and ordered it pulled down. The first sign of defiance began.

When the mimeograph order of surrender was released and the contents known to many enlisted men they slowly went out from their camp areas. When the representatives of Colonel Hilsman mostly American officers armed with the surrender order arrived at the headquarters of the sub-

sectors they found the officers and men indifferent to the order. Generally the sub-sector commanders were not for surrender but out of discipline they received the copy of the order addressed to them. Due to the distance of the sub-sector headquarters from the Force Headquarters at Fabrica, the different sub-sector commanders received the order at different hours. Major F. C Roque, CO of the 3rd sub-sector for instance received his order at 0100 Hrs, 21 May 1942. As the order to surrender was definitely ascertained and widely known among the officers and men they protested to their immediate commanding officer. They counter proposed disbandment in lieu of surrender. "Surrender" they said "is most humiliating". As the Company Commanders were waiting for orders from their sub-sector commanders during the night of the 21st of May, many of the men deserted their post and faded to the hills.

The days following the decision of Colonel Hilsman to surrender the Negros Force was replete with confusion. Both the military and civilian were divided in opinion. Generally the great majority favored resistance. In the end they were disappointed.

As the sub-sector commanders received the order to surrender their command they held conference with their staff and Company Commanders. Generally the sentiment expressed in these conferences was against the surrender and recognizing the futility of resistance countered disband-

ment of the troops. While the sub-sector commanders viewed the order with mixed feelings and sentiments, they advised their command differently. While on extreme complied with the order almost to the letter the other extreme disregarded it entirely.

Major Ernesto Mata labored between discipline and freedom finally issued the order for his command to surrender although he himself refused to surrender. When his intention was known among his troops majority of his officers and men followed his example. Only few surrendered.

Major Francisco Gomez convinced of the wisdom of surrender and the fact that his family is from Negros surrendered with the remnants of his troops for the bulk had already escaped to the hills.

Major Fortunato C Roque after consultation with his staff decided to disband his unit assuming full responsibility of his action. Due to their personal attachment and loyalty they stayed with him until he succeeded in dissuading them to leave him for their families. After repeated request from Headquarters Negros Force to surrender he finally surrendered with his S-3. When his staff learned of his action, they followed his example and surrendered too.

Major Pullong Arpa, then closest to Colonel Hilsman

Headquarters at Fabrica was not given a chance to vacillate with the order. Except "C" Co under Capt Felix Estrada, he and his command surrendered in mass.

Major Salvador Abcede on the other hand believing that General Sharpe can't surrender the Visayas as he was in command of Mindanao only decided not to disband his troops but told them to stand by. Issuing instruction to keep their arms he told them to disperse and be ready to be called later. He therefore gave reality to that idea which led to the abandonment of the defenses in Mt Canlaon in favor of guerrilla warfare which he helped planned and organized.

C. THE JAPANESE ARRIVED

At the break of dawn on 22 May 1942 the Japanese occupation troops landed at Banago Wharf, Bacolod City. A small force assigned by Major Mata to guard the wharf offered resistance until force to withdraw. As a result of this unexpected resistance the Japanese commander, Colonel Ohta, swung a part of his troops to the beach of Talisay north of Bacolod and landed them there. At the same time he asked for air support and as the Japanese planes strafed Bacolod City, Capt Jose Culig was hit in the left arm and became the first and only casualty of the Negros Force.

The Japanese immediately established their headquarters at the Provincial Capitol Building. In the meanwhile,

Major Arpa's Command were assembling at Camp Fabrica. Camp Magallon which was the other assembly point for surrendering troops was empty. The Japanese were furious and demanded an explanation. Colonel Hilsman who succeeded in escaping from the Japanese once in Davao and again in Cebu made good his apologies for the behaviour of his troops. He asked for extension and was given until 27 May 1942 to comply with the terms of surrender. In the meanwhile the Japanese took over the USAFFE troops assembled in Fabrica.

As the contact officers of Colonel Hilsman arrived in different sub-sectors they were disappointed that the places were deserted except Major Gomez headquarters. Major Gomez was instructed to assemble his troops at Camp Mambucal which was substituted for Camp Magallon as the 2nd Prisoner of War Camp. Whatever remnants were found by the contact officers, they were told either to report to Fabrica or Mambucal. By 27 May 1942 the POW at Fabrica numbered about four hundred while those at Mambucal a little over two hundred.

By the end of May 1942, the surrendered troops of the Negros Force numbered not more than seven hundred officers and men out of more than three thousand original troops. The emissaries of Colonel Hilsman failed to convince or

induce the troops to surrender until finally the Japanese in their effort to prove to the Filipinos their sincerity initiated the policy of issuing passes to the prisoners to visit their families or to convince soldiers to surrender. At first the prisoners made good their promise to return until finally so many of them failed to come back. At this stage the Japanese got suspicious of the sincerity of the Filipinos and because the number of the POW was decreasing rather than increasing, they finally stopped issuing passes and tightened the fences and increased the guards of the POW camps.

By July, 1942 the first sign of guerrilla activities became apparent. In southern Negros Japanese patrols were being ambushed. In northern Negros sugar haciendas and centrals were subjected to frequent raids. Rumors were rampant that the guerrillas will attack the Japanese guards at the Mambucal Prisoner of War Camp. Sensing trouble the Japanese transferred the prisoners at the East Elementary School Building in Bacolod City.

Around November 1942, the guerrillas now fully organized under Major Mata in the north and Major Abcede in the south became active. Threatening to liberate the Prisoners of War in Bacolod and Fabrica the Japanese decided to transfer the prisoners to the POW Camp O'Donnell, Capas, Tarlac.

Accordingly, the POW at Bacolod were boarded in a Japanese freighter on 15 December 1942 arriving Manila on 19 December. Spending overnight at the Bilibid Compound they were taken to Capas on 20 December. The POW at Fabrica followed on 20 December arriving at Capas on 24 December 1942. One month later on 21 January 1943 they were paroled only to carry on the fight against the enemy as guerrillas.

D. CONCLUSION

The Japanese war strategy in Visayas robbed the Negros Force of the opportunity to fight. When the Japanese invaded Cebu and Panay the Negros Force was expectantly waiting for a chance to engage them. They failed to come to Negros until two weeks after the fall of Corregidor - no longer as an invasion force but as an occupation troop as the Negros Force was formerly ordered to surrender.

Prior to surrender, however, the Negros Force through the foresight of some of its officers was already prepared for protracted guerrilla warfare. When the Japanese purposely failed to invade Negros while they invaded Cebu and Panay their reason was obvious - to give the Negros Force no reason for destroying the Sugar Centrals & Distilleries which constitute the main wealth of the island. They were

disappointed, however, for when they finally arrived the force which they expected to be their prisoners evaporated to the hills to spoil their plans in Negros. Before the Japanese can take control of the Sugar Centrals and destilleries, band of unsundered USAFFE officers and men had either burned the centrals or had stolen important pieces of the machineries to render them useless. In their well calculated plan to get Negros intact and exploit its potential the Japanese failed, hence from the day they occupied Negros they were hard on the population.

Consequently although officially the Negros Force surrendered unofficially they didn't. They continued the fight not as Negros Force, USAFFE but as 7th Military District Guerrillas under Lt Col Salvador Abcede, PA.

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