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ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE
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THE OPERATIONS OF COMPANY K, 103RD INFANTRY REGIMENT
(43RD INFANTRY DIVISION) AT POTPOT NEAR BINALONAN,
LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS ON THE NIGHT OF 15-16 JANUARY 1945
(LUZON CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Company Commander)

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Type of operation described: PERIMETER DEFENSE
AGAINST ARMORED ATTACK

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Captain James E. Chase
~~ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO. 1~~

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THE OPERATIONS OF COMPANY K, 103RD INFANTRY REGIMENT
(43RD INFANTRY DIVISION) AT POTPOT NEAR BINALONAN,
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ORIENTATION

INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of Company K, 103rd Infantry Regiment, 43rd US Infantry Division, on the night of 15-16 January 1945, during the initial phase of the LUZON CAMPAIGN.

As a background for the reader, the following transpired in setting the stage for this action:

After a year of humiliating defeats in the PACIFIC, the Allies, by June 1942, were able to go on the offensive, and as a result, started a series of attacks which ultimately resulted in the surrender of the Japanese Empire. (See Map A)

During these attacks, in 1944, a land mass, reasonably close to the Japanese Homeland, was required in order to support the enormous forces and material which were being assembled for a death thrust against the enemy. The PHILIPPINE ISLANDS were selected to be the base from which the assault against the Japanese Homeland would be launched. (1)

By the fall of 1944, the return to the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS by the Allies set the stage for the historic meeting of the SOUTH PACIFIC FORCES, under General MacArthur, and the CENTRAL PACIFIC FORCES, under Admiral Nimitz. (2)

However, the Japanese intended to hold the PHILIPPINES with all the Forces they could muster, and in late September

(1) A-4, p. 12
(2) A-6, p. 71

1944, began to reinforce the PHILIPPINE AREA with seasoned Forces from MANCHURIA. These Forces were well equipped in all respects except Air and Naval support. (3)

GENERAL SITUATION

On 20 October 1944, 60 days ahead of schedule, the X and XXIV Corps, of the US Sixth Army, made successful landings on LEYTE, a large island in the CENTRAL PHILIPPINES, and by 26 December 1944, all organized resistance on that island had ceased. (See Map B) (4)

On 15 December 1944, US Army Units landed on MINDORO, a large island just south and east of LUZON, and within 24 hours American planes and PT Boats were operating off the southern coast of LUZON. (See Map B) (5)

Utilizing the largest convoy ever to be assembled, a landing on LUZON was accomplished on 9 January 1945, by the US Sixth Army consisting of I and XIV Corps (I Corps--37th and the 40th Infantry Divisions -- XIV Corps--the 43rd, Sixth Infantry Divisions and the 158th Regimental Combat Team.) (See Map B) (6) The landing was practically unopposed, although the Japanese strength on the island at the time was 234,500 men. (7) By night fall of the first day, the beachhead had been widened to a depth of 4 miles, and a width of approximately 17. This was accomplished by the placing of some 68,000 men and great tonnages of material ashore. (8)

- (3) A-5, p. 280, 281
- (4) A-3, p. 108
- (5) A-4, p. 13; A-6, p. 75
- (6) A-4, p. 16
- (7) A-9, Vol. III, p. 27
- (8) A-4, p. 20

The 43rd Infantry Division, veterans of campaigns in the south and southwest Pacific, landed as part of the LUZON FORCE. Its mission was to secure the Sixth Army left flank in the SAN-FABIAN-DAMORTIS AREA, and, following the seizure of the initial beachhead, to advance inland in its zone. (9) By 15 January 1945, after eliminating a series of enemy strongpoints, the Division had advanced to a position on line extending from URDANETA in the south to a point north of DAMORTIS on LINGAYAN GULF, and was conducting operations over an area of more than 25 miles. The 172nd Infantry Regiment was occupying the left zone, the 169th Infantry Regiment the center zone, and the 103rd Infantry Regiment the right zone of the Division Sector. (See Map C) (10)

DISPOSITION OF THE 103RD INFANTRY REGIMENT

The 103rd Infantry Regiment, on 9 January 1945, made an assault landing at SAN FABIAN on LINGAYAN GULF, LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS. This Regiment was the right flank of the 43rd Infantry Division, which in turn was the left flank of the 4 Infantry Divisions participating in the initial landing. (11) The 103rd Infantry Regiment's initial mission was to clear the beach in its zone, capture the town of SAN FABIAN, SAN JACINTO and MANAOAG, plus capturing a hill mass known as HILL 200 situated approximately 8 miles inland. The strength of the Regiment, upon landing, was 2,665 Enlisted Men, 3 Warrant Officers and 144 Officers. (See Map C) (12)

The landing itself was well coordinated, the 3rd Battalion took the town of SAN FABIAN without opposition, the 2nd Battalion

- (9) A-7, p. 1
- (10) A-7, p. 10
- (11) A-12, p. 2
- (12) A-12, p. 3

passed through the 3rd and moved toward SAN JACINTO located some 6 miles inland. The 1st Battalion assisted the 2nd Battalion in moving toward SAN JACINTO.

Night fall of the day of the landing found the entire 103rd Infantry Regiment at the outer edges of the town of SAN JACINTO. (See Map C) (13)

The week following the initial landings at SAN FABIAN saw the Regiment lash out in all directions to operate along a front of 10 miles, and to penetrate the enemy defenses to a depth of nearly 15 miles. (14) Enemy strength on the broad front of the 103rd Infantry was estimated at two Battalions of Infantry, and two Companies of medium tanks supported by 4 Battalions of Artillery. (15) The Regiment took SAN JACINTO, MANAOAG and NATANGALAN, and effectively cut the Japanese routes of Communication and Supply to HILL 200. (See Map C)

The battle for HILL 200 began on the morning of 11 January 1945, and ended 17 January 1945. (16) According to later Prisoner of War reports, the hill was occupied by a Japanese Battalion of 600 men. Less than one half of these men escaped, the remainder were either killed or captured by men of the 103rd Infantry Regiment. (See Map C) (17)

DISPOSITION OF THE THIRD BATTALION

While the 2nd Battalion was engaged in the brutal struggle for HILL 200, and the 1st Battalion was fighting its way toward POZORRUBIO, the 3rd Battalion was anything but idle. After

(13) A-12, p. 6

(14) A-12, p. 7

(15) A-7, p. 10

(16) A-12, p. 10

(17) A-12, p. 10

assisting the 1st Battalion in blocking the north and west approaches to HILL 200, elements of the 3rd Battalion, although in Regimental Reserve, began to patrol to the south and north. One patrol reached the town of URDANETA and another pushed toward the formidable enemy installations at BINALONAN, where the majority of the Japanese armor on LUZON was supposed to be positioned. (See Map C) (18)

DISPOSITION OF K COMPANY, MOVEMENT TO THE DEFENSIVE POSITION AND PREPARATION THEREOF

At approximately 1500 hours, on the afternoon of 15 January 1945, K Company, which was located in the vicinity of NATANGALAN, blocking one of the approaches to HILL 200, was instructed to load into several waiting trucks, and to report to Regimental Headquarters, which was then located in the town of MANAOAG, approximately 6 miles distance by road. (See Map C) Upon arrival at Regiment, the Company Commander, leaving his Company mounted, reported to the Regimental S-3. The instructions received from the S-3, were, "Follow the main road to the village of POTPOT and organize a perimeter defense for the night." (19) (See Map C) No further instructions were given the Company Commander at this time. Returning to his Company, at approximately 1530 hours, he led them to the designated location, arriving about 1630 hours, after a wild dash of approximately 8 miles by truck. Upon arrival at the position, the trucks were dismissed, and they returned to the Regimental Command Post. It was found that a section of the 43rd Reconnaissance Troop was already occupying the area. K Company

(18) A-12, p. 13

(19) Personal knowledge

Commander took command of the area, and questioned the leader of the Reconnaissance Troop as to the enemy situation in the general vicinity. It was disclosed that the majority of the 2nd Japanese Armored Division was still located in the town of BINALONAN, approximately one mile to the east of the present company position. (See Map C) (20)

The village of POTPOT consists of about ten or twelve thatched buildings located at the junction of the MANAOAG-BINALONAN road and the PAYASISILING RIVER. The terrain, from any approach, is generally flat and open, except for occasional groups of trees along the edges of rice paddies and the river. The area within the village itself was flat and wooded. (See Map D) (21) The weather was dry and the nights without moon.

A perimeter was established utilizing the small stream as the rearmost boundary thereby gaining better observation and fields of fire. A deep ditch, which might have been considered a tank obstacle completed the right flank of the position. The perimeter ran along the road at the left flank, with a cleared field to the front offering observation and fields of fire for about 300 yards. (See Map D) (22)

Company K at this time consisted of 2 rifle platoons plus Company Headquarters (the other platoon plus the mortar section was busily engaged in patrolling activities to the north of NATANGALAN), a section of light machine guns, and a section of heavy machine guns. Morale was excellent and fighting proficiency superior.

- (20) Personal knowledge
- (21) Personal knowledge
- (22) Personal knowledge

At approximately 1 hour prior to darkness, a Sergeant, from the antitank platoon of 3rd Battalion Headquarters Company, reported to K Company Commander, and stated that his section was attached. He further stated that he had a section of two anti-tank guns, one 57mm, one 37mm, and a .50 caliber machine gun. The guns were placed within the perimeter, the 57mm gun and the .50 caliber machine gun were assigned a sector of fire covering the road to the East, toward BINALONAN; the 37mm gun was assigned a sector of fire covering the road to the west, toward MANAOAG. (See Map D)

At this point, the 3rd Battalion Commander arrived on the scene, accompanied by five American medium tanks. Upon being oriented as to the situation by the Company Commander, the Battalion Commander assumed command of the area. The tanks were placed inside the perimeter, one section covering the approaches from the east and one section covering the approaches from the west. (See Map D)

About one hour after darkness, I Company arrived at the position and the Battalion Commander placed the men of the Company in the same foxholes as those occupied by K Company, thereby placing two men in each position. By this time the perimeter was becoming rather crowded as it was originally planned for two rifle platoons. The light machine gun section of I Company was emplaced, and assigned a sector of fire covering the rear of the perimeter, as the machine guns of K Company were already covering the approaches from the east. (See Map D) The I Company mortars were placed in the center of the perimeter. However, only one gun was actually placed in a firing position,

due to the indefinite instructions given the Mortar Section Leader, and the confusion caused by the arrival of I Company. In addition, about 10 rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition were placed at the firing site of this one gun, the remainder, including the 60mm mortar flares, were located on the I Company weapons carriers. (23) The only depth provided for this position consisted of tanks, which were practically in the front lines, 4 M-8 Scout Cars which were occupied by members of the 43rd Reconnaissance Troop, 9 Jeeps, 2 3/4 ton trucks, Headquarters personnel of K and I Companies and the Battalion Commander. (See Map D)

K Company established listening posts to the front and left of the position. With this, the little perimeter settled down for what was hoped to be an uneventful night. (24)

NARRATION

THE FIRST ENEMY ATTACK ON THE PERIMETER (See Map D)

Everything was quiet until about 2300 hours, when a member of the listening post which had been established east of the perimeter towards BINALONAN, reported to the Battalion Command Post over the sound powered telephone, that he thought he heard tanks approaching the perimeter coming down the main road from the direction of BINALONAN. The Commander of K Company at this time ordered all listening posts to withdraw to the position. The man on the listening post had heard correctly. Barely had the men of the listening posts reached the security of the perimeter before 2 enemy tanks came right along the road which marked the left boundary of the perimeter. The Japanese tank crews were evidently

(23) Personal knowledge
(24) Personal knowledge

unaware of the location of the position. This was the first contact with enemy armor which this unit had experienced. The tanks moved much more quietly than did the Japanese tracked prime movers, with which the American units had become so familiar within the preceding week. The tanks were able to slip by the 57mm antitank gun's sector of fire before the exact location of the armor was known. (25) The .50 caliber machine gun, which was emplaced adjacent to the 57mm gun fired on two additional Japanese tanks, about 100 yards from the perimeter, approaching from the same direction as the first two. The 57mm gun immediately opened fire assisting the .50 caliber machine gun. These two guns fired as the perimeter was endangered only in their sector of responsibility; no other weapons in the perimeter opened fire at this time. This was done so as not to needlessly disclose the extent of the position. Meanwhile, the crews of the first two Jap ^{new} tanks, realizing that they had stumbled into some type of an American position, started to blast the entire area with their 47mm guns, their machine guns, and white phosphorus grenades; at the same time they drove ^{quickly} ~~hell bent~~ down the road beyond the perimeter. The firing from that portion of the position endangered, coupled with the return fire of tanks number three and four at our .50 caliber machine gun and the 57mm gun made a great exploding flash of about 15 minutes duration. By the time the third tank had ceased firing, the first two had passed the perimeter and proceeded down the road toward MANAOAG, where the Regimental Command Post was located. The tanks had not passed the position, however, before a 47mm shell

(25) Personal knowledge

from one of the tanks had burst and started a fire somewhere within the engine area of one of the five American medium tanks present. At the time, this presented its own particular problem, since a Sherman tank exploding is highly disconcerting, and in this case the tank was parked too close to the 37mm gun which constituted 50% of the antitank weapons of the position plus the fact that the crew of the weapon was endangered. The tank crew saved the situation by bringing fire extinguishers into play and putting the fire out in a few minutes. After the destruction of tanks No. three and four by the .50 caliber and the 57mm gun, all was quiet except for the small arms ammunition exploding in the burning Japanese tanks. (26)

THE SECOND ENEMY ATTACK ON THE PERIMETER

For a short time after that, a rather uneasy quietness settled over the perimeter, broken only by the guttural noises made by the Japanese leaders shouting orders and instructions to their subordinates. This quietness was definitely broken when a light machine gun located in the vicinity of the 57mm antitank gun of the perimeter, fired on two bright lights which appeared out of nowhere coming down the road from the direction from which the other enemy tanks had approached. The lights were quickly extinguished by the Japanese. It developed later that the Japanese had used this interlude to move their remaining tanks off to the right and left of the road, strip them of machine guns, other small arms, and organize the personnel of the tank crews and their accompanying infantrymen for a dismounted attack on the perimeter.

(28) A-12, p. 14; Personal knowledge

This dismounted attack materialized with a hail of machine gun fire from the enemy who seemed to be approaching the position from the right. This fire was returned by that section of the perimeter under fire just as enthusiastically as it was received. As this action developed, the attack on the right proved to be diversionary, and the main Japanese effort was moved through a drain ditch along the far side of the road to the left of the perimeter. This placed the enemy so that they were separated from the infantrymen within the position by only the width of the narrow road. Assisted by mortar fire and grenades, the Japanese again attempted to penetrate the perimeter from his position across the road to the left. This second attempt failed due to the non-aggressiveness on the part of the Japanese individual soldier, and the accuracy with which the American doughboy threw his hand grenades. After an hour or so of exchanging hand grenades across the road, the enemy withdrew in the direction of BINALONAN to think of some other way to penetrate the position. (27)

THE THIRD ENEMY ATTACK ON THE PERIMETER (See Map D)

The Japanese didn't ~~think very long or profoundly~~ ^{linger very long}, for within an hour, tank number five came rolling down the road from the east. This time the little perimeter was prepared for just such action on the part of the Japanese. When the approaching tank was within 25 yards of the position the 57mm antitank gun, which had been emplaced with a sector of fire in the direction of the approaching tank, opened fire. With this the enemy tank ~~obviously~~ exploded and burned, lighting up the entire area to the front, plus silhouetting the fleeing crew members of the destroyed tank.

(27) A-12, p. 15; Personal knowledge

These men were cut down ~~enthusiastically~~ by riflemen within the perimeter. Also, several 60mm mortar flares, which by this time had been secured from the weapons carriers of I Company, after needless exposure and difficult movement of personnel, were fired so as to add more light to the area. All three guns of the I Company Mortar Section had been placed in firing position without orders, and at this time, further lighted up the area to the front of the position by firing 60mm mortar flares. This action disclosed more tanks approaching the perimeter from the same direction as tank number five. With this disclosure, the 57mm gun continued to fire as fast as possible scoring direct hits on another tank.

It was felt by the K Company Commander at this time that the lone 57mm antitank gun was burdened with more than its share of the antitank responsibilities for defense of the position. Attempts were made to arouse the crews of the US medium tanks, within the perimeter, with hopes that they would join the 57mm gun in its efforts. At this time the enemy tanks were clearly silhouetted and offered an excellent target for the US tanks, however, the crews evidently were definitely not interested. All attempts to arouse them met with failure. The Company Commander of K Company went so far as to mount one of the tanks and beat upon the turret with the butt of his carbine. This produced the same identical results from the tankers -- not interested. No assistance by the US tanks at any time was offered the 57mm gun in its almost overwhelming burden throughout the entire night. What had happened was clear. With the arrival of the enemy tanks, the US tanks had buttoned up tightly for self protection and took no interest in the festivities

which the night offered. Other attempts were made several times during the night to arouse the tanks, but to no avail. The tanks remained as a turtle in danger, head in--tail in--very silent, and useless. (28)

Meanwhile, after trying desperately for more than two hours to secure some type of artillery fire support in hopes of preventing the Japanese from reinforcing any action against the small perimeter, the whizzing of artillery shells overhead announced that the effort had produced results. Although an artillery forward observer was present and equipped with a radio, due to the nature of the area and the distance of the position from Fire Direction Center, suitable contact could not be made. Efforts to secure the vital fire through use of the Battalion Commander's radio in the Regimental net also met with failure. Finally, after utilizing a series of radio relays through the elements of the 43rd Reconnaissance Troops present, success was realized and artillery fire was brought to bear on that section of the road nearest BINALONAN. The Japanese, upon receipt of the artillery fire, withdrew in the direction from which they had originally approached, apparently giving up their efforts to penetrate the perimeter. (29)

THE FINAL ENEMY ATTACK ON THE PERIMETER (See Map D)

This should have been all for the Japanese, but at dawn it was discovered that the first two tanks, which had passed by the perimeter the night before, had proceeded down the road for only a short distance, and then had pulled off into the brush at the side of the road, apparently observing the entire action of the

(28) Personal knowledge

(29) A-12, p. 16; Personal knowledge

night. Just at daybreak, these two tanks fired about 10 rounds of 47mm ammunition into the position, and then, just as they had done the night before, came hell bent back by the position spraying the entire area with machine gun fire. One of the tanks bogged down momentarily, just long enough to be fired upon by the 37mm antitank gun which had been emplaced with a sector of fire in the direction of MANAOAG from which the tanks approached. By this time the crew of the 37mm gun was a little envious of the good hunting of the 57mm gun the night before, and one well placed round of 37mm ammunition was sufficient to destroy the tank which had made the mistake of halting momentarily. This tank exploded upon being hit, and, in so doing, badly burned the members of the 37mm gun crew who had allowed the tank to approach too close prior to taking it under fire. The remaining tank proceeded by the position directing its machine gun fire at the crew of the 57mm gun. These men lay in their foxholes, allowing the tank to pass, and then, as the rear of the enemy tank presented itself as a target, returned to their gun and blew the tank to bits with a direct hit at 25 yards. ~~(30) This action did end the festivities for the night and morning.~~

To sum up the action of the night of 15-16 January 1945: Although no definite mission was given, and organization of the position was poor, the perimeter was successful in its defense of the position, thereby preventing the Japanese from endangering the Regimental area. Investigation revealed that, of the 8 tanks which set out from BINALONAN the night before, the perimeter had destroyed six, two of which were within 25 yards of

(30) A-12, p. 16; Personal knowledge

its own antitank weapons, assisted 24 "Sons of Heaven" in their desires to die for their Emperor, plus inflicting an unknown number of other casualties. The losses to the perimeter were 2 killed and 8 wounded. Losses in equipment included 1 tank, 1 jeep and trailer. This was an important and impressive victory for the units involved, and they were relieved the morning of 16 January 1945 by elements of the 25th Infantry Division, Sixth Army Reserve. (31) *And*

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

1. ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The orders and instructions received from the Regimental S-3 by the Commander of K Company, upon his arrival at the Regimental Command Post in MANAOAG, were most insufficient for what was impending. It was, at least, evident by the later arrival of other friendly units upon the position, that the additional information was available to the Regimental S-3. In this case where a Company Commander, presumed from the instructions received, was to operate as a separate unit, and to come upon the position to be occupied, finding another unit present, could have led to a great deal of confusion on the part of both units. Only by cooperation and agreement of two small unit commanders was this confusion entirely avoided in this situation.

No information was given as to the enemy situation or as to his capabilities in the area to be occupied. No indication was offered that the position was to be further reinforced, prior to the arrival of other friendly units on the scene. Had advanced notification been given, provisions could have been made to

(31) A-12, p. 17; Personal knowledge

integrate the units, which were to arrive, into the overall defensive plan. This was not done, and as a result, the arrival of units piecemeal caused nothing but confusion and over crowding of the position. With unseasoned troops under similar conditions, this situation could have resulted in disaster. Under the circumstances, the successful defense of the perimeter was attributed to well trained troops, poor intelligence on the part of the Japanese, and luck.

2. DISSEMINATION OF INTELLIGENCE

The Regimental S-3, in issuing his instructions to K Company Commander concerning the move from MANAOAG to POTPOT, gave absolutely no information relative to the enemy in the area. By the fact that the position was later reinforced, it was evident that the Regimental S-3 was aware of the fact that the 2nd Japanese Armored Division was located and operating in the general vicinity of BINALONAN. Allowing the Company Commander to leave the Command Post at MANAOAG, and to depend upon his own resourcefulness to secure the necessary information of the enemy in the area in which the Company was to operate could have endangered the Regimental position and possibly caused the loss of the perimeter. In the opinion of the writer, the possibility that the Reconnaissance element was located near the area was leaving too much to luck.

Too many staff officers are prone to take the attitude that the information which he possesses does not concern the lower unit commanders and is reluctant to disseminate this often vital information. This is particularly dangerous under combat conditions.

3. INFANTRY WEAPONS VS ARMORED VEHICLES

While an all around defense, to include tanks, is desired in a successful defense of a position against enemy armored attack, it is felt by the writer that with the minimum number of weapons organically assigned to an infantry unit, if employed properly, will be successful in destroying medium tanks and other light armored vehicles. Admitted that this defense was not thoroughly organized against any type of attack, this unit nevertheless demonstrated, utilizing only its organically assigned weapons, plus the surprise of the Japanese, that a unit can be successful in defense of its area, against enemy armored attacks, without tank support. This unit with two antitank guns (one 37mm and one 57mm) properly emplaced and employed was responsible for destroying six enemy tanks, and completely routing the enemy. Faith in the weapon, combined with proper emplacement and utilization, will spell success of organic Infantry antitank weapons against enemy armored attack.

4. DEFENSE IN DEPTH

Had the Japanese known the perimeter was held by one line, with no depth, their attacks could have been successful had they chose to commit all their available tanks at any one time along the perimeter. Some depth was gained for the position against Armor by placing the antitank guns (one 37mm and one 57mm) along the road. By either gun reversing its position and firing in a rearward direction, mutual support and depth would have been gained. It is doubtful, however, that either of the guns could have reversed its firing direction in time to inflict any damage to the tanks, due to the relative closeness of the gun positions

and the speed of the enemy tanks. Additional depth was gained by placing the tanks within the perimeter, however, they later proved useless. Depth in this case was not needed due to the nature of the action of the enemy. However, had the enemy chose to attack the perimeter as indicated above, the position would have been endangered and difficult to defend. Against an aggressive enemy armored attack, a successful defense must have depth.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

This unit was placed in position with no electrical means of communication with Regiment or the supporting artillery. No thought or consideration by anyone concerned was given to the possibility that organic radios would not provide suitable communications with parent or supporting units. This fact proved to be a serious handicap during this operation, particularly in securing necessary artillery fire support for the perimeter during the enemy attacks. Further, had the perimeter been endangered and required reinforcing from Regiment, there would have been no contact to accomplish this reinforcing, resulting in possible loss of the perimeter.

The artillery Forward Observer, after proving his own communications with F.D.C. inadequate, secured artillery fire support through a desperate two hour operation by utilizing a series of relays through Reconnaissance Troop Radios.

When units are instructed to proceed beyond the possible range of their own organic communications, serious considerations must be given to supplying the necessary communications so vital to control and use of supporting arms.

6. AMMUNITION LOCATION

No consideration or thought was given to the possible use of types of 60mm ammunition, other than High Explosive, in defense of the position. Only 10 rounds of 60mm ammunition were located at the gun positions, the entire remaining available supply was on the Company carriers. It was not until after the first attack that it was possible to bring mortar ammunition from the company weapons carriers to the 60mm mortar positions in sufficient quantity to provide necessary illumination to the area forward of the perimeter. This fact caused much concern during the initial defense, as the position was without any means of providing observation to the front during a critical phase of the defense. It was after a great deal of unnecessary movement within the perimeter and the endangering of the lives of many personnel that a sufficient quantity of 60mm ammunition arrived at the gun positions.

This situation could have been prevented had a sufficient quantity of ammunition of all types been placed at each gun position, throughout the perimeter, prior to the enemy attack.

7. PRIOR TRAINING

This unit demonstrated that the performance of an organization in combat is, without exception, directly proportioned to the excellence of its training. At no time during the enemy attacks on the little perimeter was there the so called "Hysterical Firing" of all individuals along the entire lines of the position merely because the enemy was attacking. This is usually prevalent during night combat. Only that portion of the perimeter which was subject to attack ever opened fire. No gun position was disclosed

unnecessarily by careless firing. The fact that the antitank guns allowed the enemy tanks to approach to within 25 to 30 yards of their positions before taking them under fire, adequately demonstrated that the gun crews had faith in their weapons and their ability to handle them. All of the above was acquired through training preceding the Luzon landing.

Perimeter defense was the "Order of the Night" in the Pacific Theatre of operations. This unit, although failing to organize its position in depth and getting off to a badly confused start, caused by the unannounced arrival of the various units, thoroughly demonstrated that the combat seasoning and the training received prior to the Luzon Invasion paid off handsomely.

LESSONS

1. Unit leaders must be thoroughly oriented as to the friendly and the enemy situation and they must be given a definite mission when operating separately.

2. The value and the dissemination of good intelligence cannot be over emphasized in combat.

3. Organic weapons of small infantry units, if properly employed, will successfully destroy enemy medium tanks and other small armored vehicles.

4. A defense with depth is a must in all types of operations, particularly those against Armor.

5. Units operating separately, or beyond friendly lines, must be equipped with necessary means of communications for contact with their parent and supporting units.

6. All types of ammunition must be located at gun positions prior to night fall for use during a night defense.

7. Performance of a Unit in combat is, without exception, directly proportioned to the excellence of its training.