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THE OPERATIONS OF COMPANY B, 1ST INFANTRY
(6TH INFANTRY DIVISION) IN THE SHIMBU LINE,
LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 8-10 MARCH 1945
(LUZON CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Platoon Leader)

Type of operation described: INFANTRY COMPANY ATTACKING
IN MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN

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INTRODUCTION

By the latter part of 1943 the allies had secured a strong foot-hold on New Guinea. From this base they began a series of long leap-frog operations up the New Guinea coast toward the Philippines. In October 1944 the liberation of the Philippines began with the seizure of Leyte and Mindoro.

To the Sixth Army, under the command of General Walter Krueger*, was entrusted the final and most important step in the reconquest of the Philippines. Forces assigned to the Sixth Army were widely scattered, being staged in New Guinea, western New Britain, the Solomons, New Caledonia, and the reconquered islands of the Philippines. This presented a tremendous problem in operational planning and logistics. (1)

The strength of the Japanese on Luzon at this time was estimated to be approximately 230,000. However, general information of the enemy in the area to be seized was vague. (2)

Briefly, the missions of the Sixth Army were: (a) to land in the Lingayen-Damortis-San Fernando (La Union) area on Luzon; (b) to establish a base of operations there; (c) to advance southward and seize the Central Plain around Manila; and (d) by subsequent operations to secure control over the rest of Luzon. (3) The I and XIV Corps were each to seize a specified beachhead on 9 January 1945, and then to be prepared to move southward on order and secure crossings over the Agno River. (4) (See Map A)

In all stages of the operations the terms S-Day and J-Hour were used instead of the customary D-Day and H-Hour. (5)

*Then Lieutenant General
(1,2,3,4) A-3, p. 1; (5) A-2

THE GENERAL SITUATION

"The Luzon Campaign began on 9 January 1945 with amphibious assault landings on beaches in the Lingayen Gulf" area of central Luzon, "with the XIV and I Corps abreast, the XIV Corps on the right." Both Corps landed virtually unopposed. Almost immediately after landing, however, the left flank of I Corps met bitter enemy resistance from strong positions in the hills to the east and northeast. On the XIV Corps right flank stiff resistance was offered in the hills west and southwest of Bamban and in the Fort Stotsenburg area. (See Map A)

Meanwhile the 37th Infantry Division, which formed the left flank of XIV Corps, and the 6th Infantry Division, holding the right flank of I Corps, roared through the fish ponds and streams which ran parallel to the landing beaches.

On 11 January the 25th Infantry Division, which had been afloat in Army reserve, was landed and assigned to I Corps, where it was committed on the right of the 43rd Infantry Division. (6) At the same time the 158 RCT relieved elements of the 43rd Infantry Division, which had been advancing up the coast north of the landing area. The 63rd RCT (6th Infantry Division), which had been in I Corps reserve, was attached to the 43rd Infantry Division and committed on the Division's left flank. (7)

The Japanese obviously had not considered the possibility of U.S. troops landing in the Lingayen area, since they were in the process of moving troops further north to protect the beaches at San Fernando. (8)

On January 14th the 6th Infantry Division met its first strong enemy resistance - a reinforced battalion well entrenched in the Cabaruan Hills. This battalion was destroyed, leaving 1,432 killed. (9)(See Map A)

At Urdaneta enemy armor was encountered which turned out to be elements of the Japanese 2nd Armored Division. This was something new in Pacific

(6) A-3, p. 20; (7,8) A-4, p. 2; (9) A-1, p. 89

warfare. The piecemeal commitment of this armored division resulted in its destruction, and freed the XIV Corps left flank from the threat of counter-attack.

The advance toward Manila was aided indirectly by Philippine guerrilla units which compelled Japanese withdrawal in the San Fernando region by harrassing supply lines and communication. These guerrillas were organized by Colonel Volkman, an American who had escaped from the Japanese after the fall of Bataan in 1942 and had made his way to the north. (10)

The 32nd Infantry Division landed on S+18 and relieved some of the pressure in the I Corps sector, allowing it to drive to the northeast. At the same time the 1st Cavalry Division plus the 112 RCT were assigned to the XIV Corps, and the drive to Manila was on. (11)

" On 3 February the 1st Cavalry and the 37th Infantry Division arrived in northern Manila simultaneously, while the 11th Airborne Division came pounding up from the south, reaching the southern outskirts on 10 February. By early March, after severe fighting, all Japanese troops had been cleared from Manila." (12)

The liberation of Manila did not lessen the army supply problem, since the enemy still dominated the bay by holding Corregidor and Bataan. Supply lines were still tenuous, stretching 120 miles from Lingayen Gulf to Manila. On 15 February, however, the XI Corps went into action to remedy this situation by simultaneous landings on Corregidor Island and the tip of Bataan. (13) While the 38th Infantry Division engaged in a final operation to isolate Bataan from the north, the 1st Infantry RCT drove down the bay side of the Peninsula and sliced across the middle to Bagac, thus cutting Bataan in half. By 4 March Manila Bay was opened to allied shipping. (14) (See Map B)

THE ENEMY SITUATION

Early March 1945 found the Japanese defending the mountains west of Bamban, east of Manila, and north of the Central Plain (see Map B). Although (10) A-2; (11) A-3, p. 1; (12) A-3, p. 34; (13) A-3, p. 49; (14) A-2

Manila had been opened to allied shipping, the Shimbu Line to the east was a threat to the city and the supply lines. This line was a series of strong positions extending from Laguna de Bay to include the Ipo Dam Area. (See Map B). The positions had been organized by General Yamashita in accordance with his policy of defending mountainous terrain. His forward positions were so located that he could bring long range artillery fire down on the city of Manila or endanger the city with a counterattack. (15)

There was nothing new about these fortifications. They consisted of an elaborate system of caves, tunnels, and trenches constructed by forced labor. Prearranged fires had been computed on all high ground, trails, and roads leading into the area. Great piles of ammunition had been brought up by the Japanese, including 111 pound rockets. Automatic weapons, mortars, and artillery of almost every calibre faced the American troops. (16)

An estimated 30,000 troops manned the defenses. A great number of these were service troops who had pulled out of Manila. However, the attitude of the Japanese was not one of passive defense. Their reactions to initial American thrusts were sharp and skillful, with numerous well coordinated Banzai counterattacks. (17)

From these mountain regions the enemy could control the water supply of Manila, threaten the city with attack, and endanger allied supply lines by long range artillery fire. Captured enemy documents indicated a Japanese plan was being formed to retake Manila. (18) For this reason the Shimbu Line had to be cracked. This mission was assigned to the XIV Corps. (See Map C)

THE PLAN OF ATTACK

By the 5th of March 1945, the XIV Corps had secured the foothills east of Manila. The Corps plan committed the 6th Infantry Division between the 112th RCT on the left and the 1st Cavalry Division on the right. At this

(15) A-4, p. 12; (16) A-3, p. 61; (17) A-2; (18) A-4, p. 12

time the 6th Division had two regiments abreast, the 63rd Infantry on the left and the 20th Infantry on the right. The 1st Infantry, then in division reserve, was to pass through and relieve the 20th Infantry prior to the Corps attack. This relief was made on 8 March 1945. (See Map C)

MISSION
DISTRICT
PLAN

The 1st Infantry was to attack with the 3rd Battalion on the right, the 1st on the left, with the 2nd in reserve. The 1st Battalion plan called for two assault companies, A on the left, B on the right and with C Company in reserve. (19)

As preparatory fires, heavy aerial attacks were launched against enemy installations on 5-7 March 1945. After a pre-H hour air strike in conjunction with a 30 minute artillery preparation on 8 March, the attack was launched against the Shimbu Line. (20) (See Map C)

THE COMPANY SITUATION

This was the situation of Company B, 1st Infantry Regiment, prior to the attack. The company had landed in the assault waves at Lingayen Gulf as a full strength company, with the exception of personnel that were left aboard ship to help with the unloading. Approximately 2/3 of the men were veterans of the New Guinea Campaign, well-versed in the enemy's tactics and capabilities. (21)

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The 1st Infantry Regiment was at the peak of its combat efficiency during the early stages of the Luzon operation. After the Cabaruan Hills were cleared, a night move of some 40 miles was made, and the next day San Jose, the door to Balate Pass, was seized. Thus the Japanese 2nd Armored Division was cut off and destroyed. (22)

On 12 February 1945 the 1st Infantry Regiment was separated from the 6th Division and attached to the XI Corps to take part in the operations on Bataan that were so necessary to clear Manila Bay for allied shipping.

(19) A-2; (20) A-3, p. 61; (21,22) A-2

By 26 February Company B, having been returned with the 1st Infantry Regiment to Division control, had proceeded to and occupied the town of San Mateo in the Marakina Valley, only 8 miles northeast of Manila. (See Map C)

Morale at this time was high. Battle casualties, malaria, and dysentery, however, had taken their toll. B Company, one of the largest rifle companies in the 1st Infantry, had a strength of 5 officers and 120 enlisted men and on 6 March had been in 57 successive days of combat on Luzon. The 1st was now to relieve the 20th Infantry Regiment in preparation for the attack. (23) (See Map C)

THE RELIEF OF THE 20TH INFANTRY*

On the 6th of March 1945, after consuming a hot breakfast, the 1st Battalion, 1st Infantry, left the town of San Mateo in a column of companies, with Company B leading, followed by Headquarters, A, C, and D Companies. About 1500 hours the head of the column reached the reserve elements of the 20th Infantry Regiment. On orders from the battalion commander the companies dispersed and dug in for the night.

Two hours before midnight artillery fire began to fall on the hill where the men of Company B had dug their prone shelters. Little damage was done, however, since many of the rounds were over and landed around a bridge crossing the stream behind the hill. It was questionable whether the Japanese target was the company or the bridge.

Early the next morning a hot breakfast was brought up in marmite cans from San Mateo, where the kitchens had remained. Like supper the evening before, this meal was fed during daylight hours, while the artillery liaison planes were in the air. Rarely, if ever, did the Japanese fire their large mortars or artillery, if they thought there was a chance of being observed.

After breakfast the battalion moved on toward the front, with B Company once again in the advance. By 1300 hours the destination was reached. Company

(23) A-2

*With the exception of facts indicated, this entire narrative is based on personal knowledge.

B pulled off to the left of the road, which was the only supply route in the regimental sector, and picked positions to occupy the front half of the battalion perimeter. Forward elements of the 20th Infantry Regiment were on the right side of the road with excellent observation of the objective some 1,500 yards to the front.

That night sleep was again interrupted. About 2300 hours noise was heard to the direct front, then a voice shouting commands in Japanese, followed by a series of explosions about 75 yards in front of B Company positions. This was an abortive raid by the Japs. In their retreat from the 20th Infantry, the enemy had previously abandoned some full track personnel carriers. These vehicles had been fired on by the U.S. troops and had been left in front of the position, since they were now utterly useless. When the Japanese, who were undoubtedly on a raiding mission, saw the carriers, they took them for American vehicles and decided to destroy them. During the entire episode not a shot was fired by the U.S. troops.

The silence was again broken about 0200 hours by the crack of several rifle shots, the burp of a BAR, and the explosion of several grenades on the extreme left of Company B sector. A machine gunner, attached to B Company from the heavy weapons company, was killed. This was the only casualty. It was not learned until daylight that five more Japanese soldiers had died in their ceaseless attempt at night infiltration.

While the troops were being served a hot breakfast, Captain Gerald Wiggins, B Company Commander, summoned his platoon leaders and led them to the 20th Infantry positions to give them the battalion plan of attack. The road that the 1st Infantry had used to reach its present location ran in the direction of the advance and up over the long ridge, which was ^{REPT. OBJECTIVE ?} the objective. A Company was to be on the left of the road with the exception of one platoon, which was to guide abreast of the lead elements of B Company, on the right side of the road. (See Map D) Lieutenant Colonel Francis J. Corbin, the battalion commander,

felt that the distance from the line of departure to the objective was so great that every effort must be made to reach the top of the hill quickly. Since B Company had a series of trails in its zone to add to the speed of the advance, B Company would seize its objective first. The heavy weapons company was to support the attack from its present location, and C Company, at a lower strength than either A or B, was to remain in its present location in battalion reserve until further orders.

The area over which the attack was to be made was mountainous, with steep slopes leading up to the ridge, which was generally bare of vegetation near the crest. The draws leading into the area were heavily wooded.

Captain Wiggins' company order, which was merely the order of march, stated that the 3rd Platoon would lead, followed by Company Headquarters, 1st Platoon, Weapons Platoon, and 2nd Platoon in that order. A column of platoons was to be used to gain speed in reaching the objective. The line of departure, the jump-off time, and the general route to be followed was also prescribed. It was then about 0600. Troops were quickly briefed; packs were rolled and left in platoon piles. A resupply of ammunition was not necessary.

THE ATTACK

At 0630 on 8 March the attack jumped off. The attack was preceded by a 30 minute artillery preparation, which continued until the companies were about half way up the slope. From previous experience every man in the company knew that it was imperative to reach the top of the ridge as soon as possible, even at the sacrifice of security and tactical formations. Speed was essential in order to capitalize on surprise and to follow the artillery concentrations as closely as possible. The platoon leader of the 3rd Platoon pushed his men to the limit, knowing full well that if the pace was too fast for the rear of the company, the company commander would let him know over the 536 radio.

Some 100 yards down from the crest of the ridge the platoon from Company A cut to the left, as their objective was about 800 yards left of B Company's objective. (See Map D)

Almost all of the 3rd Platoon of Company B was over the ridge before the first shot was fired. The lead scout had come face to face with some Japanese soldiers who were coming back up the hill to man their positions near the crest. When the artillery preparation had begun, they had left their firing positions to seek temporary cover in caves dug in the reverse slope. The scout hit the ground firing his sub-machine gun. This accounted for three dead Japs and an undetermined number of wounded, and forced the others to withdraw quickly. The platoon took up positions and started firing at an estimated one hundred Japanese soldiers fleeing down the grassy slope.

The 3rd Platoon leader quickly informed the company commander of the situation and asked for the artillery forward observer. Artillery fire was brought down almost immediately as a result of prepared concentrations. In order to strengthen the hold on the ridge, the company commander sent the 1st platoon around the right of the 3rd Platoon. They too were engaged in a fire fight on reaching the crest of the ridge, and undoubtedly saved the 3rd Platoon some casualties when they surprised a group of 18 Japanese trying to work up on the right flank of the 3rd Platoon.

The firing soon stopped, since the Japanese were getting out of small arms' range, and observation was difficult. The company commander next brought up the 2nd Platoon and the Weapons Platoon to the ridge top and began to consolidate his position. In the meantime he sent a small patrol from the 2nd Platoon down the ridge to the right, a patrol from the 1st Platoon a short distance to the front, and a squad from the 3rd Platoon to the left to seize Hill C which lay between B and A Company objectives. (See Map D)

Although A Company had met slightly stiffer opposition than had B Company, the excellent plan of the battalion commander brought success to that company

also. The platoon of A Company which had approached the ridge in B Company's sector and then shifted to the left, had gained the top of the objective (Hill A) before the Japs could return to their firing positions, and managed to hold them off until the rest of A Company could reach the position. By this time A Company too was consolidating its position, and a patrol was sent out to establish lateral contact with Company B on Hill C, held by the squad from the 3rd Platoon.

About 1400 hours extremely heavy machine gun fire started probing into B Company area. The weapons were quickly spotted on Hill X about 600 yards to the left front of Company B, and were silenced by artillery and small arms' fire. Several casualties had been inflicted, however, including the leader of the 1st Platoon. About the same time a bulldozer from the 6th Engineers, protected by a squad from C Company, pulled up ^{on} the reverse slope of the ridge, constructing a supply trail. The road leading to the ridge was under too heavy interdictory fire to be used as the MSR. On the heels of the bulldozer came two M-7 SPM's mounting 105mm Howitzers, from the Cannon Company. These were quickly put into position to place direct fire on Hill X. No fire was received from Hill X the rest of the day.

The battalion commander arrived in B Company area about 1600 hours, and after a glance at the situation, he decided to have C Company occupy Hill C to fill the 800 yard gap between A and B Companies. This was accomplished by 1700 hours.

Natural cover and concealment along the ridge line held by the 1st Battalion was scant. Hills A and C offered no protection other than individual foxholes. Hill B, occupied by B Company, had some trees and vegetation in addition to numerous caves and rocket positions dug by the Japanese.

Casualties for the day were light. B Company had 9 wounded; A Company about 7 wounded. C and D Company had suffered no casualties, and the battalion had none killed. On the other hand, a total of 27 Japs were accounted for by

small arms' fire in B Company area alone, plus an undetermined number by artillery fire. (24)

The men had not eaten since breakfast, so they quickly consumed the 10 in 1 rations which had been brought up by carrying parties from C Company with the help of Filipinos. Little sleep was gained on the night of 8 March. Soon after dark knee mortar shells began their chump-chump into B Company's area. This continued until almost daylight. Although a few rifle shots were exchanged, the only casualty in B Company was a 1st Platoon runner, who was hit at the Company CP by a knee mortar shell. No Japanese were found on the edge of the perimeter the next morning.

The ninth of March was a quiet day for Company B. A strong patrol was sent from the 3rd Platoon to seize Hill B-1 some 500 yards southeast of B Company's perimeter. It was decided that the rest of the platoon should join them that afternoon, because well-used trails on the forward slope indicated the enemy might try to reoccupy this high ground. The entire platoon dug in on Hill B-1 and remained there the night of 9 March. (See Map D)

Meanwhile C Company, supported by A Company, had made a futile attempt to take Hill X. (See Map E) After suffering the loss of two rifle platoon leaders and the entire 1st Platoon, they were forced to withdraw to Hill C-1 adjacent to Hill C. (25)(See Map E) Since C Company was now down to 43 men, the battalion commander reinforced them with one squad of the battalion assault platoon. This was a special platoon authorized by the theatre commander for each battalion, and was armed with rocket launchers, BAR's, demolitions, and flame throwers. With this help C Company managed to hold their position for the night. Meanwhile G Company, 1st Infantry, had occupied Hill C.

On the morning of 10 March Captain Wiggins summoned his platoon leaders to the CP. Since Hill X (See Map E) constituted such a threat to the 1st
(24,25) Statement of Captain Ray B. Quirm, Company Commander, D Company, 1st Infantry, 21 October 1948

Infantry advance, and all forward positions of the battalion had received automatic weapons fire from this dominating ground, B Company was given the mission of taking this objective. The 1st Platoon was to send a small patrol through the wooded draw northeast to pick a route of advance to Hill X 500 yards away. This was an extremely dangerous maneuver. It was better to take this calculated risk, however, than to attack over the same ground where C Company had suffered so many casualties. The attack was to jump off at 1000 after an aerial and artillery bombardment. The 1st Platoon would lead, followed by Company Headquarters, Weapons Platoon, 2nd and 3rd Platoons.

At 0900 a flight of Dauntless Douglas dive bombers was sighted over the ridge. The target area was marked with artillery WP, and the planes were led in by the Tactical Air Control Party that had arrived a few minutes earlier at B Company. Because the exact location of the enemy positions was unknown and because the target was so close to friendly troops, the flight leader would not make a run at the target. Instead he notified the TACP that he was going to land his plane in the rear area, and requested transportation to bring him up to the front line. This was accomplished in about thirty minutes, while the rest of the flight remained over the target. This was something new in air support - to have the flight leader at the front making a ground reconnaissance.

After the positions were pointed out to the pilot, it seemed like a matter of seconds before the planes were diving on the target. The results were beyond expectations, and from that day on the men of the 1st Infantry were sold on air support from the U.S. Marines. (26)

The time of attack had been pushed back until 1100 because of the delay in the air strike. But the effectiveness of the artillery fire and of the air attack allowed the leading elements of the 1st Platoon to reach the

(26) Statement of Captain Ray B. Quinn, Company Commander, D Company, 1st Infantry, 21 October 1948

objective before the first shot was fired. The company commander quickly sent the 2nd Platoon around to the left and the 3rd Platoon around to the right of the 1st Platoon, realizing that the enemy had not yet recovered from the terrific pounding, and that now was the time to knock him out. With the exception of one squad from the 3rd Platoon which had been sent 100 yards to the right to hold some high ground on the company flank, the entire company continued to work over the foxholes and caves in teams of 4 to 6 men. The men worked with incredible swiftness, covering each other with small arms fire as they moved forward, throwing grenades or demolition charges into the holes and caves. Several times Jap soldiers jumped out of the holes and tried to make a run for it, only to be cut down by rifle fire before they had taken a half dozen steps.

Hill X was taken by 1230 hours on 10 March and quickly reorganized. Company F, 1st Infantry, was sent forward to occupy a hill on line about 400 yards south. Only light opposition was met, and they were in position by 1300.

A total of 185 dead Japanese were counted on Hill X. (27) An undetermined number were sealed shut in caves by demolitions, whereas Company B had 1 man killed and no wounded. Thus ended the initial phase of the attack on the Shimbu Line. Although many strong defensive positions were still to be taken, the American forces were able to push on after this first success to complete destruction of the enemy forces. With the final piercing of the Shimbu Line, Manila was secure.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The decision of the Japanese Commander, General Yamashita, not to oppose the Americans in the Central Plains of Luzon, but rather to fight from the mountains was well founded. The mountains east of Manila constituted a strong barrier, easy to defend and difficult to penetrate. The campaign to

(27) A-1, p. 113

break this line was a long and arduous one. However, the Japanese attempt to hold all of Luzon by piecemeal defenses throughout the island was weak. One group held the mountains of Northern Luzon, another group defended the west central section near Bamban, and still another fortified the Shimbu line. This dissipation of mass allowed the Americans to concentrate their forces and destroy the enemy in detail.

The attack on Hill X was preceded by probably one of the closest aerial and artillery preparations ever recorded, yet in the final analysis the hill had to be taken by infantry. However, it was disclosed through this attack and in the attack on the initial ridge line that intense artillery preparation would cause the enemy to abandon his firing positions in order to seek cover on reverse slopes. By following close on the heels of the artillery fire, the attacking force could reach the objective before the enemy was able to reoccupy the positions and man his weapons.

In evaluating the attack on Hill X it might be said that two tactical blunders were committed. First, patrols were sent beyond the line of departure prior to the attack over the same route the attack was to follow. Had the Japanese observed this patrol, they would have been alerted as to the direction of the attack. As the company funneled through the draw over this route, they could have massed mortar and artillery fire with devastating effect on the attackers. Secondly, once the objective was reached, all troops were committed before the exact location of the enemy was known. Without a reserve force, the attackers would have been extremely vulnerable to a counterattack at this time. Although it is best to adhere to sound tactical principles, there are times when an objective may be so important as to merit taking a calculated risk to accomplish the mission.

Part of the success of this operation can be attributed to the speed with which initial gains were exploited. For example, as soon as part of a platoon gained the objective, other platoons were brought on line as

quickly as possible to protect its flanks. Security was placed immediately on all high ground to prevent counterattacks or fire from dominating terrain.

In general, orders were not issued in sufficient time for troops to be properly briefed on the lower levels. For example, in the initial attack the company order was issued 30 minutes prior to the attack. This disadvantage was offset in part by the fact that the troops were veterans and so well trained that they were able to react properly on short notice. In fairness to the troops and for the sake of efficiency, time for briefing should be allowed wherever possible.

In tropical climates personnel are subject to a large variety of diseases. In the Luzon Operation troops were required to remain in action over long periods of time causing fatigue and increasing the incidence of disease. It is realized that the shortage of troops and the diversion of certain infantry divisions to Europe caused this condition. In the attack on the Shimbu Line great efforts were made to get hot meals to the troops. This was a stimulant to the morale and overcame in part the effects of fatigue caused by the long period of continuous combat.

During jungle fighting in the Pacific, troops had become accustomed to the close-in perimeter defense at night. Under jungle conditions they dug in with positions close together and fired on whatever moved. However, this system did not work so well in the fairly open ground of the mountains. The practice of remaining underground at night allowed the Japs to move about under cover of darkness and to approach the defensive position with comparative ease. It is felt that in this terrain the positions should have been more dispersed with visiting patrols which could have secured better observation and surprised enemy groups moving in on the defended position.

LESSONS

Some of the lessons emphasized by this operation are:

1. Surprise and aggressive action will frequently insure quick success against defenses which otherwise would be difficult and expensive to overcome.

2. Close aerial support can and must be obtained to aid the advance of the Infantry.

3. The quick action of attacking infantry troops after an artillery preparation cannot be over emphasized.

4. Hot meals can and must be served to combat units, both to insure the stamina and morale of the men.

5. After an objective has been taken, dominating ground should be taken wherever possible to secure the unit while reorganization^{is} is taking place.

6. Well-trained troops can function properly even though emergency conditions prevent them from ^{without} being adequately briefed.

7. The loss of leaders in combat is normal, particularly in rifle units. Their replacement must be provided for by the training of non-commissioned officers.

8. In mountainous terrain, established and proved combat formations can be sacrificed for speed and control to reach the objective.