

General Subjects Section
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT
THE INFANTRY SCHOOL
Fort Benning, Georgia

ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE
1947 - 1948

OPERATIONS OF THE XXIV CORPS IN THE INVASION
OF LEYTE ISLAND

21 October 1944 - 26 December 1944
(LEYTE CAMPAIGN)

(Personal Experience of a Member of the Com-
manding General's Staff)

Type of operation described: ARMY CORPS IN THE ATTACK

Major Charles V. McLaughlin, Infantry
ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO 1

15927

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Index.....	1
Bibliography.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Sixth Army Plans.....	5
Terrain.....	7
XXIV Corps Plans.....	9
Operations to Secure the Beachhead Line.....	10
Operations: Expansion and Exploitation.....	18
Japanese Air-Borne Counter Attack.....	23
Operations on the West Coast.....	28
Analysis and Criticism.....	34
Lessons.....	39
Map A - Strategic Situation, Pacific Theatre	
Map B - Terrain - Movement (Leyte)	
Map C - Landing - Establishment of BHL	
Map D - Expansion of Beachhead	
Map E - Operations On the West Coast	
Map F - Japanese Airborne Counter attack	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A-1 Operation Report, XXIV CORPS, LEYTE, 20 October to 25 December 1944.
(TIS Library)
- A-2 Ours To Hold It High, The History of the 77th Infantry Division in World War II.
(TIS Library)
- A-3 Report of the LEYTE Operation, SIXTH ARMY, 20 October 1944 - 25 December 1944
(TIS Library)
- A-4 Operation Report, 7th Infantry Division, KING II.
(TIS Library)
- A-5 Operation Report, 7th Infantry Division, KING II: Annex 5.
(TIS Library)
- A-6 G-1 & G-4 Summary, LEYTE, 77th Infantry Division, 23 November 1944- 25 December 1944, App. #2
(TIS Library)
- A-7 NEW YORK TIMES, dated 26 December 1944
(Library, USMA, West Point, N.Y.)
- A-8 The Deadeyes, The Story of the 96th Infantry Division. (Davidson, Willems, Kahl)
(TIS Library)
- ✓ A-9 Terrain Study No. 84, LEYTE PROVINCE, Allied Geographical Section, Southwest Pacific Area, 17 August 1944.
(TIS Library)
- A-10 Singapore And After, (Lord Strabolgi, RN)
(TIS Library)
- A-11 A History of World War II. (MILLER)
(TIS Library)
- A-12 Admiral Halsey's Story. (Halsey and Bryan)
(TIS Library)
- ✓ A-13 Report After Action With The Enemy, Operation KING II, LEYTE Campaign; Hq, 11th Airborne Division; Dated 28 May 1945.
(TIS Library)

THE OPERATIONS OF THE XXIV CORPS, (SIXTH ARMY)
IN THE INVASION OF LEYTE ISLAND, 21 OCTOBER 1944
TO 26 DECEMBER 1944.

(LEYTE CAMPAIGN)

(Personal experience of a member of the Commanding General's Staff.)

INTRODUCTION

This monograph presents the operations of the XXIV Corps, SIXTH ARMY, during the invasion of LEYTE ISLAND, PHILIPPINES ARCHIPELAGO, from the date of the invasion on 20 October 1944 until General of the Army Douglas MacArthur announced on the 25th of December 1944 that organized resistance on the island had ceased. (1)

First, an orientation in the strategic developments within the PACIFIC THEATER is required, in order to develop the purpose and show the events leading up to the execution of the plan for the liberation of LEYTE.

Allied Forces had met with slow but consistent successes which, in the Southwest Pacific Theater, had brought them from PORT MORESBY, ^{British New Guinea} BNG, to MANUS, in the ADMIRALTY ISLANDS, and MOROTAI in the HALMAHERAS. (2)

Admiral William F. Halsey's forces in the SOUTH PACIFIC THEATER had forced their way north from GUADALCANAL in the Southern SOLOMON ISLANDS to GREEN ISLAND, in the NORTHERN SOLOMONS. (3)

In the CENTRAL PACIFIC THEATER, an inexorable island to island advance westward, by forces under the command of Admiral of the Fleet Chester A. Mimitz had resulted in the establishment of a series of bases stretching across the PACIFIC OCEAN from HAWAII to PELELIU, in the PALAU IS-

(1) A-7; A-2, p. 190; (2) A-11, p. 648; (3) A-12, p. 188.

LANDS. (4)

Such was the strategic picture in the PACIFIC on 15 September 1944. (Map A)

The return to the PHILIPPINES had for some time been receiving consideration from GHQ, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER, and the Commanding General SIXTH ARMY, had been directed to prepare plans for such an operation. (5)

A tentative target date for the initial thrust into the islands had been set for 20 December 1944. (6)

By that time, sufficient air, troop and logistical support would be available in the theater to overcome the anticipated prompt and violent Japanese reaction. (7)

The objective was to be LEYTE, strategically dominant island of the PHILIPPINES ARCHIPELAGO. (8)

The occupation of this island by ALLIED FORCES would effectively block any attempted advances south on the part of the Japanese, and would poise a threat at the entire PHILIPPINES which could not be ignored. Loss of these islands would imperil the vital life line from JAPAN to the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES, as well as eliminate key outposts, comprising part of the so called secondary ring of defenses protecting the heart of the JAPANESE EMPIRE. (9)

At this time, there were two things presenting themselves as grave threats to an American reoccupation of the PHILIPPINES. These were the IMPERIAL JAPANESE NAVY and the IMPERIAL JAPANESE AIR FORCE. (10)

- (4) A-11, p. 654; (5) A-3, p. 3; (6) A-3, p. 17;
(7) A-3, p. 17; (8) A-3, p. 7, A-9, p. 3, A-8, p. 17;
(9) A-13, p. 200; (10) A-13, p. 198.

Both arms were hoarding their strength and avoiding decisive combat until they felt that it could be joined on their terms. (11) Both arms were considered to be powerful and effective. Past experience had proven them to be dangerous adversaries. (12)

On 14 September, Admiral William F. Halsey, commanding the UNITED STATES THIRD FLEET, reported that JAPANESE air resistance to his naval air strikes in the PHILIPPINES was comparatively ineffective. (13) His efforts against the islands had not caused a strong JAPANESE naval reaction. (14)

The corollary to Admiral Halsey's successful sorties into the PHILIPPINES was that our surface units could operate and successfully defend themselves in PHILIPPINE waters, hitherto deemed too dangerous to exploit without adequate cover from land based air support.

The results of Admiral Halsey's attack against the JAPANESE in the PHILIPPINES were forwarded to the JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF together with the suggestion that invasion operations be mounted immediately against the islands. (15)

SIXTH ARMY PLANS

As previously stated, GHQ, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER, had tentatively assigned the invasion task to SIXTH ARMY.

Upon JCS approval of the operation, instructions to effect the implementation of the plan were given to SIXTH ARMY and the target date of 20 October 1944 was established.

(11) A-3, p. 205; (12) Personal knowledge; (13) A-3, p. 18, A-12, p. 198, A-8, p. 13; (14) A-13, p. 199; (15) A-12, p. 200, Personal knowledge.

This meant that the operation was to be set up sixty days sooner than had been previously contemplated. (16)

Initially, SIXTH ARMY had planned to land on LEYTE using two Corps; The X Corps, controlling the 1st Cavalry Division and the 40th Infantry Division, along with the XIV Corps, to be made up of the 24th Infantry Division and the 37th Infantry Division. In addition, an adequate army reserve and supporting troops would be supplied. (17)

Moving the target date forward meant that the XIV Corps could not discharge its existing commitments in time to meet the newly established date. (18)

At this time, however, a fully equipped Army Corps, the XXIVth, was afloat in the CENTRAL PACIFIC enroute to an amphibious assault on the island of YAP, an operation to be conducted in the PALAUS in conjunction with the First MARINE AMPHIBIOUS CORPS. (19)

The XXIV Corps could be diverted from its mission and assigned to SOUWESPAC, which meant that the LEYTE invasion, designated as KING II, could and would take place as newly scheduled, on 20 October 1944. (20)

The Corps was placed under the operational control of SIXTH ARMY and on 15 September 1944, coincident with the departure of the last elements of the XXIVth from PEARL HARBOR, the mission of the Corps was changed from the seizure of YAP to a participation in the invasion of LEYTE, P. I. (21)

(16) A-3, p. 3; (17) A-3, p. 3; (18) A-3, p. 18;
(19) A-3, p. 18; (20) A-3, p. 18, A-8, p. 15;
(21) A-3, p. 18.

TERRAIN

LEYTE ISLAND, an elongated, irregularly shaped island approximately 115 miles long and 15 miles wide, is included in the NORTHEASTERN VISAYAN GROUP, and lies between SAN JUANICO STRAIT AND SURIGAO STRAIT. (22)

Extending north and south through the west-central part of the island is a range of mountains, comprised of heavily rain-forested extinct volcanoes ranging to an altitude of 4500 feet. This range, with its precipitous ravines, spurs, and ridges, presents an effective barrier to motorized movement between the east and west coast of LEYTE.

Vehicular movement is possible over only two routes.

One lies to the north outside the XXIV Corps zone of action; the other, within the Corps zone, extends from ABUYOG on the east coast to BAYBAY on the western side of LEYTE. (23)

North and east of the mountains lies a broad, fertile plain: The LEYTE VALLEY. This valley forms a wide corridor between the central mountains and low hills lying along the eastern coast. This is the important military area of LEYTE.

Maneuver by foot and vehicles is excellent during the dry season but is almost impossible for all except foot troops during the rainy season. (24)

On the north, LEYTE VALLEY opens into CARIGARA BAY, and on the south, into the lowland coastal region between TACLOBAN and ABUYOG.

(22) A-3, p. 5; A-9, p. 1; (23) A-3, p. 5, A-9, p. 4;
(24) A-3, p. 5, A-9, p. 4.

The only other militarily important valleys on LEYTE are the TACLOBAN VALLEY, which joins LEYTE VALLEY near PALO; and the ORMOC VALLEY, lying north of the town of ORMOC. (25)

Control of LEYTE depends upon control of these three valleys.

The beaches of LEYTE ^{where} were admirably suited to an amphibious assault. (26) The gradient was steep enough to allow landing craft to beach well in and effectively discharge personnel and cargo under all but the most adverse weather conditions. The firm volcanic sand provided adequate traction and hard enough standing for even the heaviest engineer equipment. No reefs or coral heads exist along the beaches. (27)

From the tide line, the beach rises for a distance of from sixty to two hundred yards and then drops off to a low-lying valley floor, swampy and poorly drained.

In the initial landing zone ^{no + shown} of the XXIV Corps, CATMON HILL rose almost sheer on the seaward side to a height of about 1400 feet and then sloped gradually inland to the floor of LEYTE VALLEY. (28)

The road nets fall naturally into two systems. The southern, entirely coastal, and the northern, which affords access inland to the mountains. (29) The nets are tied together by a mountain road west from ABUYOG to BAYBAY and north from BAYBAY to CARIGARA BAY. (30) (Map B)

LEYTE is the eighth largest island in the PHILIPPINES

- (25) A-3, p. 5; (26) A-9, Terrain; (27) A-9, p. 1;
(28) Personal knowledge; (29) A-9, p. 2; (30) A-9, p. 2.

ARCHIPELAGO, with a population estimated at about one million. (31)

XXIV CORPS PLANS

One unique feature of the planning phase of the operation is brought out here for consideration.

The diversion of the XXIV Corps from its original mission meant that the 7th Infantry Division and the 96th Infantry Division, major combat components of the Corps, plus all supporting and service troops of the corps, were afloat, in convoy sailing under radio silence, and fully briefed and mounted for a landing on a place that they now were not even going to see. (32)

The Corps Commander, Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, (then Major General) with key members of his staff, disembarked from the command ship, the USS MOUNT OLYMPUS (AGC-8) just prior to its departure from PEARL HARBOR and shortly thereafter proceeded by air to HEADQUARTERS, SIXTH ARMY, at HOLLANDIA, D.N.G., to prepare plans and orders for operation KING II. (33)

The staff difficulties attendant to this diversion were met and overcome, and the final reassembly of the Corps afloat was accomplished at SEADLER HARBOR, MANUS, ADMIRALTY ISLANDS, on 3 October 1944, at which time final detailed orders were issued to the divisions and corps troops along with the eagerly awaited map distributions. (34) This distribution was a laborious process involving ship to ship delivery using small boats, and, in some in-

(31) A-9, p. 1; (32) Personal knowledge; (33) Personal knowledge; (34) A-1, p. 4, A-5, p. 2.

stances, planes. (35)

The mission of the XXIV Corps, operating under SIXTH ARMY, was to land on A-Day on the east coast of LEYTE, seize the DULAG-DAGAMI-BURAUEN-TANAUEN area, and destroy hostile forces therein. (36) This, the first phase, would consist of the seizure of the beachhead line within the boundaries defined above. (Map C) Successive phases from the XXIV Corps standpoint were to consist of exploitation and complete destruction of the enemy within the zones of action subsequently assigned to the Corps by SIXTH ARMY. (Map D)

OPERATIONS TO SECURE THE BEACHHEAD LINE

On A-1 Day elements of the SIXTH ARMY secured the entrance to LEYTE GULF. Seventh FLEET naval units instituted mine sweeping operations. (37)

At 0800I, on 20 October 1944, naval and air units commenced a heavy bombardment of the LEYTE beaches. This bombardment lifted and moved inland at 0950I. At 1000I, elements of the XXIV Corps began landing on Orange, Blue, Violet, and Yellow Beaches. Simultaneously, X Corps began landing on the XXIV Corps right. (38)

Within the XXIV Corps zone, the 96th Infantry Division* landed on the right, and the 7th Infantry Division** on the left. (Map C)

Each division initially put ashore four battalion landing teams carried in LVT's and LVT(A)s. (39)

This formation was identical with that planned for

(35) Personal knowledge; (36) A-3, p. 20; (37) A-3, p. 37; (38) A-3, p. 32; (39) A-1, p. 4, A-8, p. 2, A-5, p. 2; *Major General James L. Bradley; **Major General A. V. Arnold.

*Entire Army Plan should be shown on map of 10/14/44
Plan of Corps not given.*

the landing on YAP, where the employment of amphibious tracked vehicles was essential to insure a successful transit of the fringing reef.

Succeeding waves coming ashore at LEYTE were able to proceed directly from transports to the beaches in LCVP type boats because of the favorable aspects of the beaches. (40)

Survey not shown

The XXIV Corps scheme of maneuver prescribed that the 96th Infantry Division would by-pass CATMON HILL, the dominating terrain feature in the Corps beachhead zone of action, and attack rapidly north and northwest to effect a junction with elements of X Corps; seize the DAGAMI-TANAUEN highway, and secure the northern boundary of the Corps beachhead. (41) (Map C)

The 7th Infantry Division was to make its main effort west to BURAUEN, capture the airfields in its zone, capture DAGAMI on the north, and cover the south flank of the Corps. (42) (Map C)

The Corps Commander felt that, although CATMON HILL presented a definite threat to the Corps landings, it could be successfully neutralized by the available naval gunfire and air support. (43)

If the 96th Division became too much involved initially with the CATMON HILL defenses, valuable time would be wasted which could be spent much more profitably in an exploitation of the beachhead.

Considered in this reasoning was the fact that the

(40) A-1, p. 6; (41) A-1, p. 6; (42) A-1, p. 6;
(43) Personal knowledge.

381st Infantry Regiment, 96th Division, constituted part of the SIXTH ARMY reserve and would not be available to assist in the reduction of CATMON HILL during the initial landings.

This reasoning proved to be justified. The Japanese defenses on CATMON HILL were bypassed and contained until 30 October when the Commanding General, SIXTH ARMY, released the 381st Infantry Regiment for the purpose of insuring the elimination of the position. (44)

The naval and air preparation delivered by supporting air and naval units proved so effective that initial enemy resistance developing from the extensive field fortifications established by the Japs immediately inland from the beaches was relatively ineffective and light. (45)

In the 96th Division zone, the amphibious tanks of the 780th Tank Battalion and the infantry of the 383d Infantry Regiment spearheaded the assault. The enemy reacted with sporadic mortar and artillery fire which caused some casualties. (46)

The Division advanced rapidly inland against moderate enemy resistance, centered mainly on LABIRNAN HEAD, a hill approximately 2600 yards from the beach. The 383d Infantry Regiment gained this key ground on 22 October. (47)

When the beach road was reached, elements of the 96th Division moved north while, on 24 October, the 382d Infantry Regiment reduced strong enemy positions protecting the approaches to HINDANG. (48) (Map C)

(44) A-1, p. 9; A-8, p. 23; (45) A-1, p. 10; A-8, p. 21;
(46) A-3, p. 39, A-8, p. 21; (47) A-3, p. 39; (48) A-3, p. 39.

On 25 October, the 382d Regiment moved north to TABONTABON, where the 383d was held up by strongly organized enemy defenses. (49) (Map C)

On the 26th of October, the 382d Infantry pushed forces across the GUINARONA RIVER into TABONTABON but a strong Japanese counter-attack drove them back across the river. (50) (Map C)

With a coordinated attack, and personally led by the regimental commander, the 382d drove into TABONTABON on the 27th and secured the town. (51)

The 96th Division then wheeled and advanced northwest against sporadic resistance. (Map C) On 26 October, the 3d Battalion of the 381st Infantry Regiment moved north to TANAUEN where they contacted elements of the X Corps. (52) (Map C)

From there they moved southwest on the TANAUEN-DAGAMI road to KILING, which was secured on 29 October 1944. (Map C)

This unit was then relieved by elements of the 382d Infantry on 29 October. (53)

On the 27th of October, the 381st Infantry, now released from SIXTH ARMY reserve took LABIR HILL, the southern approach to CATMON HILL, and on 28 October eliminated Japanese resistance on CATMON HILL, which had been bypassed and contained until this time. (54) (Map C)

During the reduction of the CATMON HILL defenses, over seventy organized pillbox type defenses were overrun and

(49) A-3, p. 39, A-8, p. 35; (50) A-3, p. 39; (51) A-3, p. 39; (52) A-3, p. 39; (53) A-3, p. 39; (54) A-3, p. 39, A-1, p. 9, A-8, p. 32.

destroyed.

On the Corps left, the 7th Infantry Division drove rapidly inland to capture DULAG AIRFIELD on 21 October and the town of BURAUEN on 24 October 1944. (55) (Map C)

During this advance, the Japanese defended from isolated islands of resistance, seemingly lacking command unity and coordination.

The premature dislodgment of the Japanese from their very well organized beach defenses had thrown them off balance and this balance was not to be completely regained throughout the LEYTE CAMPAIGN. (56)

The Corps reserve, the 17th Infantry Regiment, was released to the control of the Commanding General, 7th Infantry Division, on A plus 2 days.

During the advance, on BURAUEN elements of the 7th Division over-ran the SAN PABLO and BAYUG AIRFIELD but were held up by strong defensive positions protecting BURI AIRFIELD. (57) (Map C)

The BURI defenses were broken on A plus 7 day by coordinated infantry and tank action. (58)

From BURAUEN the 7th Division turned north and advanced astride the road to DAGAMI. (Map C)

Very determined resistance was met and overcome with the occupation of DAGAMI on 30 October 1944. (59)

During this advance, which represented the 7th Division task in the establishment of the Corps beachhead line, the division had destroyed or rendered ineffective

(55) A-1, p. 6; A-4, p. 5 - 7; (56) Personal knowledge;
(57) A-1, p. 6; A-4, p. 6; (58) A-1, p. 6, A-4, p. 8;
(59) A-1, p. 6, A-4, p. 10.

the following listed Japanese Army Units:

- a. 3d Bn., 20th Infantry Regt.
- b. 4th Btry., 22d FA Regt.
- c. 5th Btry., 22d FA Regt.
- d. 2d Bn., 20th Infantry Regt.
- e. AT & Regtl Gun Co's,
20th Infantry Regt.
- f. 3d Bn., 33d Infantry Regt.
- g. 7th Ind Tank Co.
- h. 54th Airfield Construction Unit
- i. 16th Division Engr Trans Unit. (60)

On A-Day advance elements of the Corps Headquarters landed immediately behind assaulting elements and moved to CALBASAG to establish the command post ashore. (61)
(Map D)

The Corps command post afloat remained aboard the USS MOUNT OLYMPUS (AGC-8). The site selected at CALBASAG had been chosen by map reconnaissance and with the thought in mind of keeping it on an axis of advance between the two assaulting divisions. (62)

Actually, on the ground the location turned out to be most unsatisfactory. (63)

However, the forward command post was established as planned at CALBASAG under conditions of terrain and proximity to the beachhead which presented so many difficulties that communications could not be considered adequate until 23 October 1944. (64)

At 1200I on 23 October, the Corps command post opened ashore and simultaneously closed out aboard the MOUNT OLYMPUS. (65)

The Corps Commander assumed command ashore at 1500I on the same day. (66)

(60) A-4, p. 3; (61) Personal knowledge; (62) Personal knowledge; (63) Personal knowledge; (64) Personal knowledge; (65) A-1, p. 6; (66) A-1, p. 6.

The facilities afforded the Corps Commander at this time resembled far more those of a battalion command post than an Army Corps. (67)

The Corps troops were new to combat, consequently, confusion on the beach, enemy raids, and encroachments on the headquarters area by service troops all combined to disorganize the operation of the command post. Physical facilities were extremely limited. Necessary communication facilities were in, however, and maintained by telephone and radio to SIXTH ARMY, the 7th Division, and the 96th Division. (68)

On the beaches unloading progressed with excellent results. By A plus 4 all of the assault shipping had been unloaded, putting 55,000 troops and 85,000 DWT of cargo ashore with nominal losses. (69)

Thus, with support assured, the first phase of Operation KING II, the securing of the beachhead line, was accomplished on 30 October 1944 when the 96th and 7th Infantry Divisions established contact in the vicinity of DAGAMI. (70) (Map C)

At dusk on the 24th of October, a solitary Japanese raiding plane dropped a bomb on our beach installations between DULAG and the sea. This attack touched off an inferno.

The bomb exploded in the ammunition dump established on the beach for the 7th Division, within small arms range of the Corps Command Post. (71) Three-fourths of a divi-

(67) Statement of Colonel K. C. Strother, D/C of S, Opns, Hq XXIV Corps; (68) Personal knowledge; (69) A-1, p. 6; (70) A-1, p. 9; (71) A-4, Sup & Evac.

sion unit of fire burned and exploded throughout the night.

Over one hundred and fifty casualties were sustained by troops in the vicinity, and command operations in the Corps command post were carried on under extremely disconcerting conditions caused by the frequent impacts of large pieces of shell, vehicles and unidentified debris. (72)

During the burning of the ammunition dump, word was relayed to Corps from SIXTH ARMY that the Japanese Navy had launched an assault against the LEYTE landings and that an attack against our surface transport units and shore installations should be anticipated. (73)

The Corps Commander immediately ordered the 155mm rifles of the 11th Marine Gun Battalion, and the 226th FA Gun Battalion, part of XXIV Corps artillery under the command of Brig. Gen. T. E. Rourke, (USMC) to be turned around and trained seaward. (74)

As this was being accomplished, passive defense measures were taken, and that seemed to be all that could be done about the threat from surface units of the Japanese Fleet.

The naval battles of the PHILIPPINES SEA and LEYTE GULF are now a part of recorded history and there is no need to conjecture upon what might have happened. The immediate effect upon the Corps was the loss of all naval gunfire and air support after 24 October 1944. (75)

Japanese aviation subsequently became very active against both troops operating inland and ^{around} the beachhead. (76)

(72) Personal knowledge; (73) Personal knowledge;
(74) Personal knowledge; (75) A-1, p. 9; (76) A-3,
p. 71.

This loss of naval and air support, coupled with the advent of torrential rains which assisted in the rapid and complete disintegration of roads materially, lessened the support rendered by the Corps to the 7th Division and 96th Division, during the latter part of the first phase of the LEYTE operation. (77)

OPERATIONS: EXPANSION AND EXPLOITATION

On 1 November the XXIV Corps was charged with the execution of the second phase of KING II.

The Corps mission was now expanded to that of destroying all Japanese forces in southern LEYTE. (78) (Map D)

The concept of the Corps plan was as follows:

1. The 7th Infantry Division to drive north from BAYBAY up the west coast to destroy enemy in their zone. (BAYBAY was the inland terminus of the only cross-island road within the Corps zone.)
2. The 96th Infantry Division to execute a holding attack east of the central mountainous area of LEYTE.
3. Japanese forces would thus be trapped between the XXIV Corps on the south and the X Corps on the north. (79) (Map D)

This plan implied early seizure of the ABUYOG-BAYBAY road. Therefore, the 7th Division immediately instituted operations to secure this road, meanwhile turning over their beachhead responsibilities to the 96th Infantry Divi-

(77) A-3, p. 45, A-4, p. 11; (78) A-1, p. 9; (79) A-1, p. 9.

sion. Garrison forces at PANAON STRAITS at the south tip of LEYTE were also replaced at this time by elements of the 7th Division. (80)

The 96th Division was now assigned a zone which included the original beachhead. (Map D) Their mission was to drive west to the mountains, destroying all enemy forces within their zone of action, locate and secure the eastern exits of all trails leading over the central mountains. (81)

Enemy resistance within the zone was centered at DAGAMI, where, although the barrio was in our control, the enemy had retreated to the swamps and rice paddies. He stubbornly resisted our advances westward toward the mountains. Well-prepared defensive positions were encountered which guarded the trail entrances into the hills. (82)

The Japanese were determined to hold these critical points at all costs, both in order to deny the American forces use of the trails to move into western LEYTE, and to reserve them for the use of their own expected reinforcements. (83)

Within this mountainous terrain some of the bitterest fighting of the LEYTE CAMPAIGN took place as elements of the 96th Division pushed forward against an enemy who held in place until death.

The supplies to support the attack in this sector

(80) A-1, p. 9; (81) A-1, p. 9, A-8, p. 45; (82) Personal knowledge; (83) Statement of Major General J. L. Bradley, Com. Gen. 96th Inf. Div., A-8, p. 52, A-8, p. 49;

were brought forward by jeep as far as they could go, then carabao took over, and the last mile or two was usually by hand carry over tortuous, sniper-infested supply trails. (84)

While the 96th Division was forcing ^{Jap} troops into the mountains, the 7th Division drove south to ABUYOG, thence over the mountain road to BAYBAY, encountering only scattered light resistance. (Map D)

BAYBAY was occupied by a reinforced battalion of the 17th Infantry on 5 November 1944. (85) (Map D)

The Japanese, heavily engaged with the 96th Division in the center of LEYTE, and with the X Corps in the north, were unable to effectively resist movement of our forces to the western coast of LEYTE. (86)

From BAYBAY reconnaissance units of the 7th Division moved north up the coast to contact and feel out the enemy defenses of ORMOC, now the most important port on the island still in possession of the Japanese. (87)

On 10 November, elements of the 7th Division made contact with a strong enemy defensive position at DAMULAN. (88) (Map D)

At this time the introduction of large numbers of enemy reinforcements had caused a shift in the SIXTH ARMY dispositions to meet a Japanese threat to the right (North) flank of Army. (89)

The ability of the Japanese to land forces at will under their own air cover had resulted in an estimated increment of 60,000 troops, of which 22,440 were first-

(84) Personal knowledge; (85) A-1, p. 11, A-9, p. 11;
(86) Personal knowledge; (87) A-1, p. 11, A-4, p. 12,
A-5, p. 92; (88) A-1, p. 11, A-4, p. 13; (89) A-3,
p. 58.

line combat veterans.

On the 25th of October, he had brought in the 41st Infantry Regiment. By 3 November, General Yamashita had brought in the 35th Army Headquarters, the entire 1st Division, XXIV Corps Headquarters, 30th Infantry Division Headquarters, major elements of the 102d Infantry Division, the 41st Independent Infantry Regiment, the 169th Independent Battalion, and the 171st Independent Infantry Battalion. (90)

The initial defenders of the island had been the 16th Infantry Division, with a strength of about 16,000, plus an Independent Tank Company. Thus, on 3 November 1944, the combat efficiency of the Japanese forces on LEYTE was greater than it had been on A-Day. (91)

In consideration of the threat to SIXTH ARMY flank, as brought out by the presence of the enemy reinforcements and capabilities of the enemy to effect an amphibious counterattack in north LEYTE, the XXIV Corps was assigned the mission of securing the DAGAMI-JARO road and thus acquired a new zone of action which extended to the JAO-PALO road on the north. (92) (Map D)

The responsibility for this new area was in turn imposed upon the 96th Infantry Division. (93)

All of the Corps zone lying south of GUINARONA was made the responsibility of the 7th Infantry Division. (94) (Map D)

At this same time, SIXTH ARMY directed that one com-

(90) A-3, p. 41; (91) A-3, p. 42; (92) A-3, p. 56;
(93) A-1, p. 11; (94) A-1, p. 11.

bat team be held in readiness for displacement to the north in the event it became necessary to support X Corps, and that another be held ready for a proposed operation in northern MINDANAO. This SIXTH ARMY readjustment meant that the entire 7th Division could not be displaced to the west coast at that time. (95)

On 18 November 1944, the 11th Airborne Division (Major General J. M. Swing) had arrived at LEYTE and, on 22 November, was placed under the operational control of the XXIV Corps. (96)

By 28 November 1944, the 11th Airborne Division had assumed the responsibilities of the 7th Division in the BURAUEN area thus permitting the entire 7th Division to be massed on the west coast of LEYTE in preparation for a drive north on ORMOC. (97)

On 23 November, the 77th Infantry Division (Major General A. D. Bruce) arrived at LEYTE and was placed under the operational control of the XXIV Corps. The division was immediately moved into reserve positions along the eastern coast South of CATMON HILL. (98)

In early December on the West coast, the Japanese mounted several strong attacks against the 7th Division but were not successful in penetrating friendly screening forces, consequently, were kept in doubt as to the strength and composition of this force threatening the rear of their base positions. (99)

An amphibious move had been under consideration for

(95) A-1, p. 11; (96) A-3, p. 64, A-13, p. 2; (97) A-3, p. 64, A-13, p. 2; (98) A-1, p. 12, A-2, p. 139; (99) A-9, p. 18.

some time which envisaged a landing in the vicinity of ORMOC in order to wrest control of that important port from the Japanese. (100)

XXIV Corps had received a directive from SIXTH ARMY on 23 November which initiated the planning phase of the amphibious move, the execution date to be determined by the availability of shipping adequate to support the movement. (101)

On 5 December 1944, the Corps established an advanced command post at BAYBAY in order to remain completely abreast of tactical developments concerning the 7th Division and to be in a position to better control the projected amphibious move. (102)

JAPANESE AIR-BORNE COUNTER ATTACK

As the operations described above had been taking place, the Japanese executed a counter-attack using airborne troops.

This marked the first use by the Japanese of their air-borne components since 14 February 1942 when they had been employed very effectively against the Dutch forces in the attack on PALEMBAUG, N.E.I. (103)

This attack developed as follows:

On 26 November 1944, during the early hours of darkness, approximately 2030I, two transport planes crash-landed on the beach south of DULAG, and immediately south of the Corps Command Post. Prior to these landings, friendly fighter cover had been flying low over the vicin-

(100) A-3, p. 62; (101) A-3, p. 62; (102) Personal knowledge; (103) A-10, p. 111-112, Statement of Lt. Gen. Suzuki, 17th Jap Army Hq., Keijo, Korea.

ity seeking emergency landing facilities, but had been recognized and identified as friendly. (104)

Consequently, when two planes apparently C-47's (DC-2) landed at the tide line of the beach defended by the 723d Amphibious Tank Battalion, personnel of beach defense units rushed toward the wrecked planes in an effort to lend assistance. (105)

Their efforts were greeted by bursts of automatic fire, and the planes were tardily identified as Japanese.

Taking advantage of the surprise gained, the enemy fought their way through the partially alerted beach defenses and disappeared inland, leaving several enemy dead behind who had been killed in the plane crashes and subsequent short, sharp engagement. (106)

While this was taking place, another plane of the same type was shot down by anti-aircraft units as it sought to effect a landing on BURI AIRFIELD. (107)

An estimated thirty enemy escaped our searching parties with twenty three of these eliminated in the next few days.

Identifications and documents carried by the troops indicated an airborne operation directed at LEYTE within the immediate future. (108)

^{The}
~~One~~ Japanese knew from bitter experience that retention of usable airfields within tactical air range of their installations was the prelude to intensive bombings, and their operations were to be directed at the elim-

(104) Personal knowledge; (105) Statement of Colonel Jensen, Commanding; (106) Personal knowledge; (107) Personal knowledge; (108) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 67.

ination of such threats posed at them from LEYTE. (109)

On 4 December, it became apparent to Corps intelligence that there was a marked increase in enemy activity west of the BURAUEN AIRFIELDS. (110) (Map F) Enemy ground personnel were infiltrating our lines, exerting a minimum of offensive effort, rendezvousing behind our lines, and hiding in small groups deep in the swamps and rice paddies. (111)

The BURAUEN AIRFIELDS at that time were no longer being used for combat aircraft operations, although there were approximately eighteen non-operational fighter type aircraft left on the fields. (112)

BURI AIRFIELD was being utilized for the operation of liaison type aircraft in conjunction with support of the 11th Airborne Division and for intermittent C-47 casual traffic. (113)

At 1800I on 6 December, FIFTH AIR FORCE air warning agencies reported the presence of large numbers of bogies (unidentified planes) south of LEYTE GULF. (114)

At 1840I, enemy fighter aircraft attacked anti-aircraft batteries in the vicinity of DULAG. This was followed by a low-level bombing attack hitting beach installations and airfields in the BURAUEN area. (115) Immediately following the bombers, a large formation of DC-2 type aircraft dropped an estimated two hundred and fifty paratroopers on the northeastern end of the SAN PABLO strip. (116) (Map F) This area evidently was the planned drop

(109) Statement of Lt. Gen Suzuki, C/S 17th Jap Army, Hq, Keijo, Korea; (110) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 67; (111) A-8, p. 67; (112) Personal knowledge; (113) A-13, p. 2; (114) A-1, p. 12; (115) Personal knowledge; (116) A-1, p. 12, A-8, p. 67, A-13, p. 5.

zone as only a score of other paratroopers landed in other areas within the Corps zone.

This action was part of the 35th Japanese Army plan which called for coordination of the drop with an assault on the BURAUEN airfields by remaining troops of the 16th and 26th Japanese Divisions. (117) The 16th Japanese Infantry Division was successful in moving some five hundred supporting troops into the immediate vicinity of BURI AIRFIELD. (118) (Map F)

Very few identifications of the 26th Infantry Division were ever established in this action, and it is presumed that members of this unit found it impossible to fight their way through the U.S. 11th Airborne Division in time to participate in the operation. (119) The 11th Airborne Division had effectively blocked the mountain passes through which the 26th Japanese Division had to come.

This coordinated attack of paratroopers with the 16th Japanese Infantry Division created much confusion among the air and service elements that bore the brunt of the attack. (120)

Very few prepared defenses had been manned, in spite of a Corps order issued on 27 December which had directed that measures be taken to meet any attempted airborne attack. (121)

Personnel of the Fifth Air Force proved completely incapable of defending themselves or their installations

(117) A-8, p. 67, A-13, p. 4; (118) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 67; (119) A-13, p. 5; (120) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 69; (121) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 67.

and prompt efforts on the part of 11th Airborne, 96th Division, and Corps troops, to contain and repel the invaders was greatly hampered by the abandonment of installations and weapons to the invaders. (122)

With the first hours of daylight on 7 December, artillery, service, and headquarters personnel of the 11th Airborne Division attacked up the road toward SAN PABLO strip from the south. (Map F)

This attack was personally led and spearheaded by the Commanding General of the 11th Airborne Division, accompanied by several members of the staff. These units were stopped some distance short of the airfield for lack of adequate support weapons. (123)

The 149th Infantry Regiment (less one battalion) of the 38th Infantry Division, which was enroute to another operation had just arrived at LEYTE. This regiment was placed under the operational control of the XXIV Corps, with further attachment of one battalion to the 11th Airborne Division. (124)

The 1st Battalion of the 382d Infantry Regiment also had been attached to the 11th Airborne Division and was in position near the SAN PABLO airfield. (125) The 11th Airborne Division, using these attachments, along with their own service and artillery personnel, planned the execution of coordinated attack on 8 December. (126)

Uncoordinated ^{attacks} units by all units in the vicinity had meanwhile eliminated a major portion of the Japanese

(122) A-1, p. 27, A-8, p. 67; (123) Personal knowledge;
(124) A-1, p. 14; (125) A-8, p. 67; (126) A-13, p. 2.

and forced their withdrawal on the night of 7-8 December to the northern side of BURI AIRFIELD. (127) (Map F)

The enemy was cleared from these positions by elements of the 96th Infantry Division and the 11th Airborne Division by evening of 10 December. (128) (Map F)

During the night of 10-11 December, the Japanese completely evacuated the airfield area and this ended the action except for a few stragglers who were subsequently hunted down and killed. (129) On 11 December the area was considered secure.

During this action approximately 600 Japanese were killed in the accomplishment of nothing but harassment. Once again the Japs had failed to follow up their initial advantage and had wasted valuable combat strength on a futile mission.

OPERATIONS ON THE WEST COAST.

On 5 December a coordinated effort of the XXIV Corps against ORMOC was well on its way.

Plan of 77th Div next

The 7th Infantry Division was attacking north from DANULAAN in conjunction with the 11th Airborne Division attacking through the mountains to the west in a movement designed to envelope the 26th Japanese Infantry Division. (130) (131) (Map D) In an amphibious assault on the morning of 7 December, the 77th Infantry Division landed against light resistance at DEPOSITO on the western coast of LEYTE. (132) (Map E)

This meant that the XXIV Corps had a division behind

(127) A-1, p. 14, A-13, p. 5; (128) A-8, p. 69; (129) A-1, p. 14, A-8, p. 69; (130) A-1, p. 16, A-4, p. 15; (131) A-1, p. 16; (132) A-1, p. 16, A-2, p. 148.

the 26th Japanese Division opposing the US 7th Infantry and 11th Airborne Divisions, and that the 77th US Infantry Division was threatening the rear of the enemy troops operating to the north in the upper ORMOC valley against the right flank of SIXTH ARMY. (133) (Map D)

The US 7th Infantry Division reached a point on the coast about 6000 yards south of DEPOSITO, when the 77th Division landed at that town, wheeled, and started its drive north. (134)

After landing at DEPOSITO, the 77th Division advanced rapidly to the north against stiffening enemy resistance until forward elements reached CAMP DOWNES. (Map E) Here the Japanese resisted with determination and vigor. (135)

It is interesting to note, how, as the 77th Division advanced up the coast, so-called initial expansion of a beachhead was literally kept at a minimum by the following procedure.

Rather than commit a large share of his troops to the defense of a perimeterized beachhead, out of which a long supply line would support his division as it moved north, General Bruce chose to, as he phrased it, "drag his tail up the beach". (136)

This meant a continued northern displacement of the entire division while keeping an anchor on the sea into which amphibious support was fed and a supply line of minimum length was established and led. All supply and

(133) A-1, p. 16; (134) A-1, p. 16; (135) A-1, p. 16;
(136) A-2, p. 153, Statement of Major General A. D. Bruce,
Com. Gen. 77th Inf. Div.

evacuation for the Division was accomplished by water.
(137)

CAMP DOWNES was captured on the 9th of December.
(138) This yielded dominating terrain to the 77th
Division and on the next day the division captured
ORMOC. (138) (Map E)

The division continued to advance to the north and
captured VALENCIA on the 18th of December. (Map E) Re-
sistance to the movement north now became very determined
as the Japanese strove to recover their balance and meet
the grave threat to their entire LEYTE defense. (139)

After developing and overcoming this resistance the
77th seized LIBUNGAO, and control of the important road
junction immediately to the north of the town. (140)
(Map D)

Meanwhile, more Japanese reinforcements had been met
and identified.

The 5th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese 8th Divi-
sion had landed at PALOMPON on the 15th of December and
moved rapidly east to oppose the 77th Division. (141)
These were the last reinforcements that the Japanese
were able to land on LEYTE.

On 21 December, contact was made between the XXIV
Corps and the X Corps at CANANGA. (142) (Map E)

The phase of the campaign wherein the 77th Division
moved north from DEPOSITO to CANANGA was characterized by
confusion and blunders on the part of the Japanese com-

(137) A-3, p. 79, A-6, p. 2; (138) A-1, p. 16, A-2,
p. 157; (139) A-1, p. 16, A-2, p. 179; (140) A-1, p. 16;
(141) A-1, p. 16; (142) A-1, p. 16, A-2, p. 185.

manders.

Our continued offensive had torn their communications apart to such an extent that Army and Corps units of the Japanese could obtain no timely information concerning the efforts and dispositions of their defending echelons. (143)

A typical result of this disorganization occurred on the night of 11-12 December when Japanese reinforcements attempted to land at ORMOC apparently believing their forces still to be in possession of the port. (144)

A resupply convoy for the 77th Division arrived at the Port simultaneously with the arrival of the Japanese reinforcements. Self-propelled weapons of the 77th Division opened fire on the ships and barges of the enemy inflicting heavy casualties. Fortunately, American shipping was able to disentangle quickly enough to give the shore based echelons clear fields of fire. (145)

Concurrently with the 77th Advance to the north, the 7th and 11th Airborne Divisions had made contact at 23 December 44 on the west coast, thus completing the envelopment of the 26th Japanese Infantry Division. (146) (Map E)

The 11th Airborne Division had encountered desperate resistance from the Japanese throughout their entire movement across the mountains, with the centers of resistance centered in the MAHONAG-ANAS area. (147) (Map E)

Supply of the division had posed a tremendous problem

(143) A-2, p. 173; (144) A-2, p. 163, p. 164; (145) Personal knowledge; (146) A-4, p. 21, 25; (147) A-13, p. 4.

but had been solved by the ingenious utilization of liaison type planes plus what aerial cargo carriers the troop carriers could spare. (148) Only one small air strip was available after the eastern coastal area had been left and medical problems became increasingly difficult to solve.

A hospital was dropped to MAHONAG which rendered definitive treatment and held casualties until they could either be hand carried or flown to a clearing station.

(149) In some instances hand carry time from this hospital to the nearest clearing station was as long as twelve days. (150)

On 11 December the 7th Infantry Division had reached IPIL. Displacement was north from there until, on 24 December, the 7th had assumed responsibility for all of the west coast of LEYTE south of the line PALOMPON-VALENCIA. (151)

After contact was made with the X Corps on 21 December, the 77th Division changed their direction of attack and drove westward along the road to POLOMPON. (Map D) Continuous, well-organized enemy positions slowed the division down to advances of only a few hundred yards per day at the cost of heavy casualties. (152)

In order to effectively break this resistance, the 77th Division landed a reinforced battalion in rear of the Japanese at PALOMPON, depriving them of their last port on

(148) A-13, p. 2; (149) A-13, p. 3; (150) A-13, p. 12;
(151) A-1, p. 17; (152) A-2, p. 189.

LEYTE and rendering the position of the Japanese forces between PALOMPON and LIBUNGAN untenable. (Map D) (153) **F**

This amphibious enveloping movement, which was executed on the night of 24-25 December, was unique in that it involved a water movement of over forty miles by LVT'S. (154)

This was the longest tactical move over water that was ever made by employment of this type of vehicle.

(155) Only three of the tractors were lost en route, all losses being due to mechanical failure, and, out of these three, all personnel were safely transferred before the vehicles sank. (156)

This operation marked the close of the campaign under SIXTH ARMY. (157) During the period from 20 October until 25 December 1944, units under the operational control of the XXIV Corps had killed 35,013 of the enemy and taken 198 prisoners of war. (158)

The casualties sustained by the Corps during this period were 1370 killed in action and 5009 wounded and missing in action. (159)

Organized resistance on the island of LEYTE had been broken and subsequent total elimination of Japanese forces was accomplished by operations directed by the US Eighth Army. (160)

(154) A-1, p. 17; (155) Statement made by Operations, GINCPAC; (156) A-1, p. 17; (157) A-1, p. 17; (158) A-1, p. 23; (159) A-1, p. 99; (160) A-3, p. 83.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

In effecting an analysis of this operation it appears that great difficulties were met by the Corps in fulfilling logistical and administrative obligations.

The operations of the XXIV Corps were well planned and superbly executed by the divisions that fought under the operational control of the Corps. From the time that the first assault echelons landed until the time that Japanese forces on LEYTE were destroyed the issue was never in doubt.

The struggle to keep the roads open, however, was a different story. The main roads on LEYTE paralleling the coast and crossing the mountains from ABUYOG to BAYBAY had been euphemistically described in intelligence reports as "all weather roads".

These roads could have been all weather roads if adequate engineer support had been available to the Corps.

It must be remembered that the Corps had been mounted out of OAHU, T. H., and equipped for operations on the island of YAP, where road building considerations were negligible.

This meant that XXIV Corps Engineers were organized with a preponderance of shore party elements, and were very light on construction engineers, as a minimum of engineer road maintenance had been anticipated on YAP.

Thus, when the Corps was diverted from the STALEMATE operation it was required to function on a large (comparatively) land mass without the Engineer support commensurate with its task.

Out of a T/O allowance of two hundred and sixteen dump trucks, only one hundred and twenty were brought from HAWAII, many small engineer tools were not shipped, equipment ^{FOR} ~~from~~ the construction of Bailey bridges was not adequate, and rock crushers were not available. Wheeled vehicles in general had been left behind in favor of the amphibious tracked vehicles which were necessary to transit the fringing reefs protecting YAP.

Shortly after landing, the advent of the rainy season, coupled with a lack of easily obtainable road metal, helped destroy the narrow two lane dirt roads available within the Corps zone. However, the factor that contributed the most to the destruction of the roads was the extremely heavy vehicular traffic placed upon these roads by SIXTH ARMY priorities before adequate preventive maintenance could be instituted by the XXIV Corps.

Aviation engineer construction troops were given early landing and movement priorities. The equipment carried by these troops is extremely heavy, and their movement over inadequate supporting roads to airport construction projects caused rapid and complete deterioration of vital supply roads.

The lessons learned by bitter experience in the SOUTH PACIFIC seem to have been ignored on LEYTE. The crux of those lessons was, that in order to build an airfield, roads must be built to the airfield first. The failure of aviation construction engineers to develop the BURAUEN airfields deprived the FIFTH AIR FORCE of adequate air facilities on LEYTE, which in turn denied the ground forces

effective tactical air support.

Supply by water to the west coast, coupled with extensive use of air drops by the 11th Airborne Division did allow operations to proceed at a satisfactory pace.

This situation, however, is not desirable unless control of the air and sea is assumed.

On LEYTE this control was not a "fait accompli".

Shipping losses were incurred in supplying the west coast that would not have been incurred if normal and adequate engineer support to construct and maintain overland routes had been made available by SIXTH ARMY.

Lack of such routes forced our naval units to operate in waters exposed to Japanese air and naval action.

This naturally resulted in a marked reluctance to go to the west coast by water with supplies and a marked alacrity in returning.

The tracked amphibious vehicles proved invaluable for movement up and down the beaches when the paralleling roads inland were impassable. A maximum use of this type of transport was made by the XXIV Corps.

The XXIV Corps accomplished its mission on LEYTE with a dispatch and effectiveness that reflects great credit upon the Corps Commander.

The coordination of supporting naval gunfire and air strikes as effected by the Corps was excellent. The efficacy of this was demonstrated by the neutralization of the commanding ground in the Corps zone (CATMON HILL) for a matter of days while the ground was by-passed. The retention of this key terrain by the enemy never serious-

ly hampered the operations of the 96th Infantry Division.

The XXIV Corps was never on the defensive during the entire span of the LEYTE operations. Elimination of the Japanese paratroop attack was accomplished by reserve elements with no effect on our front line troops unless it was to increase their morale.

The operations on the west coast were carried out with a daring and speed that materially lessened the time necessary for the destruction of the Japanese forces.

The assumption of a calculated risk involved in placing the 77th Division on the flank and rear of the enemy by an amphibious operation mounted and carried out with the barest minimum of support proved to be very profitable.

Rapidity of movement and the substitution of movement for contact with the enemy kept the Japanese continually on the defensive. As he sought to engage frontally our forces sought the flanks and rear of his positions and found him most susceptible.

Prior to the landings on LEYTE terrain information was inadequate and misleading. The Corps was unable to obtain sufficient and accurate maps. The few supplied lacked completeness and accuracy and good aerial photos were not available. Lack of aerial photos of critical areas severely handicapped the divisions.

These photos would have been particularly valuable to the small units and combat patrols that bore the brunt of the LEYTE fighting.

At one time during the operations on the west coast

it was necessary to maintain a Corps command post in two places, and at the same time assume the full burden of the logistical support of four divisions without adequate supporting troops or assistance from Army. This imposed a tremendous burden upon a Corps staff designed and set up by T/O for tactical operations.

During this same period of operations on the west coast, the Corps Commander made daily trips by liaison aircraft through all kinds of adverse weather conditions from his CP at DULAG to the advance CP at ORMOC.

It is regrettable that adequate tactical air support was not available to the ground forces on LEYTE.

It is realized that concepts of air warfare may often-times preclude direct assistance to ground forces, however, timely air strikes on the Japanese reinforcements staged in through ORMOC at will could have easily eliminated a major portion of enemy combat strength before that strength was committed to action against our forces.

Herein, it would be interesting to know the actual degree of cooperation at high levels between the FIFTH AIR FORCE and the THIRD FLEET.

In summing up the actions of the XXIV Corps, we find that during the LEYTE Campaign units of the Corps accomplished all missions assigned to them. This fact, coupled with a statistical analysis which indicates that a total of 30 Japanese dead was exacted for every American who gave his life, pays high tribute to the degree of leadership displayed throughout the units comprising the Corps.

LESSONS

In consideration of what may be learned from this operation, let us say that the time-honored nine principles of war were known to the commanders involved and that the fullest exploitation of those principles was accomplished with a resultant victory. That appears to be obvious.

However, some facts become outstanding as an analysis is made of the operations of the XXIV Corps.

Conclusions from those facts are as follows:

1. The Japanese forces were highly susceptible to any form of attack wherein the emphasis is placed upon fire and maneuver.
2. In modern warfare, massing of artillery fires is essential. The greatest single weakness of the Japanese forces on LEYTE was their inability to effectively mass the fires of their artillery.
3. In amphibious warfare, the defender who permits the enemy to accomplish logistical exploitation of a beach-head has committed a fatal mistake.
4. Expedients can and must be devised to insure that lines of communications to dependent elements ^{must} be kept open regardless of terrain and climate.
5. Violations of security and premature press releases may result in increased casualties and intensified enemy resistance.
6. Realistic training, with a heavy emphasis on small unit teamwork pays dividends in increased combat effectiveness.
7. The Table of Organization of a Corps Headquarters does not allow sufficient personnel to provide the flexi-

bility which is essential to an amphibious operation in which the Corps is expected to operate as an administrative as well as a tactical unit.

✓ 8. Reconnaissance agencies must be employed by all echelons of command.

✓ 9. Propaganda plans must be carefully studied to eliminate flaws before any attempt is made to implement such plans; otherwise more harm than good may be accomplished.

10. Adequate engineer support beyond shore party requirements must be accorded an amphibious operation directed at a large land mass.

✓ 11. Provision must be made for early replacement of personnel casualties.

12. The principle of coordination must be appreciated and adhered to in spirit by all levels of command to include all arms and services.

✓ 13. Adequate and timely troop indoctrination will effectively combat enemy infiltration tactics.

14. Employment of paratroopers without regard for the principle of mass constitutes only a harassment.

15. Liaison type aircraft provide an excellent source of communications and may be effectively employed to evacuate casualties, thus eliminating long arduous ground trips.

16. Air power used to isolate the battlefield will result in greatly lessened attrition in an operation of this type.

17. Control of the air is desirable but it is not essential to the success of a limited offensive.