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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 2D BATTALION,
182D INF. (AMERICAL DIVISION) IN
THE V-2 OPERATION
26 MARCH 1945 - 19 APRIL 1945
(Personal experience of a Company Commander (Co G) & Battalion Commander)

Type of operation described: BATTALION IN ATTACK

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers in partial detail the operations of the 2d Battalion, 182d Infantry, and in more detail the actions of Company G during the first phase of the Cebu Campaign. In the latter stages of the initial phase, the author was promoted from a Company Commander to a Battalion Commander, and placed in command of the 1st Battalion, remaining in this capacity until the division was deactivated in December 1945.

For the sake of clarity, the operation will be divided into two phases, first the attack and ^{final?} culminating assaults which secured Cebu City and the surrounding areas, and secondly, the pursuit which localized and destroyed the enemy miles north of Cebu City. (1)

The second phase will be referred to in generalities, since the action was staggered and disconnected, and any reference to this phase simply serves as a successful conclusion to a bitterly contested victory. (2)

Certain references, geographical and military, will make their appearance in this monograph, so it is felt necessary at this point to enumerate and explain them in so far as they pertain to the subject matter presented. They are; namely, "The Visayan Campaign", involving the term V-1 and V-2 North and South Visayas, and "The Allied Order of Battle Chart" (3); the strategic importance of the islands involved; the background of these same islands because of their unique distinctions in the Philippine group; the tactical plan to be executed; the enemy order of battle in so far as it was known at the time prior to the operations; and the actual enemy strength existing on the islands when the invading troops met them in battle. (4)

(1, 2, 3, 4) Eye witness, self.

By the middle of March 1945, the campaign for the liberation of the Philippines had successfully passed the climactic stage. The original American footholds on the periphery of the archipelago had, by a combination of multiple amphibious assaults on the beaches and protracted engagements in the mountains, been expanded until they formed an almost continuous ring around the islands. (5)

On Leyte and Samar to the east, the last of the Japanese remnants were being destroyed. On Luzon to the north, enemy defenses were disintegrating as Manila fell to the forces of liberation. Mindoro, Marinduque, and the miscellaneous island groups astride the overwater routes through the Visayas were in the final mop-up stage. The enemy's grip on Palawan on the Western edge of the archipelago had been broken and our operations in Zamboanga (western Mindanao) and the Sulu Archipelago had disrupted his communication and evacuation routes to the south. With the only remaining escape route to eastern Mindanao dominated by our motor torpedo boats and our air superiority established everywhere, the central Philippines had been turned into a vast trap. Embattled conquerors but a few months before, the Japanese garrisons in these islands were now condemned prisoners facing ultimate capture or annihilation. (6)

Although the four islands comprising the southern Visayas (Panay, Negros, Cebu, and Bohol) are a strategic and economic entity, their liberation required two distinct operations employing two separate task forces. (7)

The mission of seizing and securing Panay and Negros Occidental was designated the Victor-I Operation and assigned to the 40th Infantry Division with the 503d Parachute Regimental Combat Team attached. The operation to liberate Cebu, Bohol, and Negros Oriental was called Victor-II, with the Americal Infantry Division designated as the attack force. (8)

BACKGROUND

General.---Situating in the very heart of the Philippine Archipelago and separated from Mindanao on the southeast by the Mindanao Sea and from

(5) Eye witness, self; (6, 7, 8) A-1, p. 1.

Mindoro on the northwest by the Sulu Sea, lies a group of islands known as the Southern Visayas. This group includes the four major islands of Panay, Negros, Cebu, and Bohol and several lesser ones, the most important of the latter being Mactan and Guimaras. (9)

Geographically, the characteristics common to the Philippine Islands as a whole apply to the Southern Visayas. Their terrain features follow generally the typical pattern of a central mountain mass surrounded by low-lying coastal plains and scored by numerous short, turbulent, and seldom-navigable streams. Like the other islands of the Philippines, the Visayas are heavily wooded, and native methods of land cultivation tend to permit the development of vast areas of high growing grass or "cogonales", which seriously hamper movement and limit observation.

A brief account of the geographical features of the four islands is given in the ensuing paragraphs. Terrain, vegetation, transportation facilities, and roads are also discussed in this geographical study. (10)

Cebu - Bohol:

Geography.--The two islands of the southern Visayan group, long, narrow Cebu and oval-shaped Bohol, are similar to Negros and Panay in topographical aspects. Mountain chains with elevations up to 3,000 feet form the backbone of both islands. They are heavily populated and as a result have been practically cleared of trees in order to grow corn, the staple crop. On Cebu, minor forested areas remain in the central mountains, while on Bohol, a few "cogon" grass areas and forests exist in the central part. (11)

Transportation facilities.--On Cebu, transportation facilities include a paved highway around the island and three cross-island roads. A narrow-gauge railway, inoperative when we landed, parallels the coastal highway. Similarly, a hard-surfaced road encircles Bohol, which has, in addition, a well-developed radial system of highways running from the coast to the center of the island. (12)

(9, 10) A-1, p. 4; (11, 12) A-1, p. 9.

Airfields.--The two most important operational airfields in Cebu are Lahug airstrip at Cebu City and Opon Field on nearby Mactan Island. Other airfields on Cebu appear to have been little used by the Japanese. However, it is believed that they could easily be made serviceable. Bohol's four airfields, though not used to any great extent by the Japanese, could be extended and rendered operational within a short time. (13)

Industry.--Cebu City, which was a thriving industrial center of almost 150,000 population before the war, is second only to Manila among the cities and seaports of the Philippines. It has an excellent harbor and is the commercial and political heart of the Visayas. Prior to the Japanese invasion, three major oil companies had extensive stocks on hand in Cebu City, and an oil well produced 400 barrels a day. A large cement plant (later captured intact in the Victor-II Operation) and coal mines with a daily output of 100 tons were also in operation. But the Cebu City that fell to the American troops on 27 March 1945 was largely a mass of rubble. What our bombers had missed was almost completely destroyed by the Japanese when they withdrew. (14)

In contrast, the island of Bohol has no industrial development or harbors of any consequence and is altogether the most backward of the Visayas. (15)

Health and sanitation.--Throughout the islands in the southern Visayas, problems of health and sanitation are those indigenous to the Philippines as a whole. Outbreaks of all types of intestinal diseases, ranging from diarrhea and dysentery to the dread cholera, occur. Insect-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever are also widespread although it is reported that cases of the former occurring in Cebu were not contracted there. (16)

There is a high incidence of respiratory diseases such as bronchitis, pneumonia, and tuberculosis. Infection is rife, and minor cuts and abrasions must be treated immediately to prevent the development of tropical ulcers. The enteric fevers, typhoid and paratyphoid, are also common, while fungus infections of the skin typical of the tropics are widespread. (17)

(13, 14) A-1, p. 9; (15, 16, 17) A-1, p. 11.

Cases of leprosy, too, are not uncommon and Cebu heads the list as the province most heavily infected with this disease in the entire archipelago. Cebu City and the surrounding communities are the focal points. Before the war it was hoped that local treatment centers would gradually replace the large Culion leper colony in the Palawan group, but during the Japanese occupation segregation was not strictly enforced. (18)

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Strategically, the campaign for the liberation of the Philippines reached its climax in the deceptive operations on Mindoro and Marinduque during January 1945. These minor feints in the islands south of Luzon threw the enemy off balance by creating the impression that the major American thrust would come from that quarter. Shortly thereafter, Luzon was invaded from the northwest, and, with its liberation well advanced and Leyte-Samar already secured, the key to the Philippines was ours. (19)

Subsequently, the clearance of the Visayan Passages and the smashing of the enemy grip on the Palawan Group completed the encirclement of the Japanese garrisons in the central Philippines. It was now only a question of time before the isolated and entrapped enemy would finally be exterminated.

From a purely strategic viewpoint, the southern Visayas are less significant than their northern neighbors; but they could not be dismissed lightly from the overall plan of the war in the Pacific. Their occupation was important to the Allied strategy for the following reasons: (20)

1. They control the vital inland water passages connecting the Visayan, Mindanao, and Sulu Seas.
2. They provide more than a score of well-situated airfields.
3. They are the principal food-producing area to the Philippines.
4. Cebu City is the second most important harbor and industrial center in the Philippines.

The Eighth Army's amphibious strikes in the southern Visayas, therefore, were designed to consolidate our hold on the entire archipelago by giving us

(18) A-1, p. 11; (19, 20) A-1, p. 12.

access to vital waterways, strategic airfields, and natural resources of this rich heartland of the Philippines. (21)

PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

Operations Instructions No. 93 and No. 94, received from General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area, on 26 February and 3 March, respectively, launched the Eighth Army in its plans and preparations for the seizure of the islands in the southern Visayan group. Two distinct overwater operations known as Victor-I and Victor-II were planned. (22)

Operations Instructions No. 94 directed the Eighth Army, with the support of Allied Naval and Air Forces, to: (23)

1. Seize by overwater operations Cebu City on Cebu and nearby Mactan Island and establish naval and logistic facilities for the support of future operations.
2. Continue the offensive to destroy hostile forces on and establish control over Cebu.
3. Destroy hostile forces and establish control over the Negros Oriental area by employing elements of available forces in shore-to-shore operations.
4. Make special provision for the capture intact of the Portland Cement Plant.

The Commanding General, Sixth United States Army, was directed to prepare, stage, and mount the 40th Infantry Division for the operation from Luzon, but control was to pass to the Commanding General, Eighth Army, upon embarkation. The latter was further charged with the establishment of logistic facilities required to support subsequent shore-to-shore operations and minor naval facilities as arranged with the Commander, Allied Naval Forces:

1. Transport and establish landing forces ashore in Cebu and provide naval protection for them.
2. Conduct subsequent overwater operations to transport and establish landing forces on Negros Oriental and Bohol.

(21) A-1, p. 12; (22, 23) A-1, p. 13.

3. Establish naval facilities and initiate motor torpedo boat operations in the Cebu City area at the earliest practicable date.
4. Escort and protect shipping on the lines of communication to the Cebu, Bohol, and Negros areas.
5. Deny the movement of hostile reinforcements and supplies to these areas.

The mission of the Allied Air Force was to:

1. Provide aerial reconnaissance and photography of the Cebu, Negros, and Bohol areas.
2. Provide air cover for the naval task forces and convoys and direct support for the landing and subsequent operations.
3. Assist Allied Naval Forces in denying the movement of hostile elements and supplies to Cebu and Bohol.

TACTICAL PLAN

The Americal Division, reinforced, (less the 164th Regimental Combat Team in Army reserve) was named as the task force for the Victor-II Operation. The division's primary mission was to liberate Cebu, but the operation also included the seizure and occupation of Negros Oriental and Bohol. (24)

The Americal had been engaged in operations on Leyte since January, and on 3 March the Commanding General, Eighth Army, directed that those elements of the division that were to be employed in the Victor-II Operation be relieved from missions on Leyte by 10 March in order to stage and mount. Replacements were taken from the 164th Infantry to bring the other two regiments up to strength for the operation. (25)

Eighth Army Field Order No. 23 published 7 March designated 25 March as the target date (E-Day) for the operation. By an amphibious assault, our troops were to seize a beachhead in the Talisay area on the eastern coast of Cebu. The field order directed the division to advance rapidly along the coast to the northeast and capture Cebu City, its airfields, and harbor installations. As soon as possible after E-Day, forces were to land on the nearby islands of Mactan and Olango and to seize the airfield of the former. (26)

(24, 25) A-7, p. 56; (26) A-9, p. 56-57.

The tactical plan further called for a minimum force from the Americal Division to land near San Vicente on Bohol when directed by the Eighth Army Commander, in order to destroy hostile units on that island. (27)

Additional shore-to-shore operations were to be conducted later by the division to liberate Negros Oriental. Following the establishment of a beachhead in the Ocoy River-Sibulan Area, our forces were to sweep southward toward the town and airfield of Dumaguete, the chief objectives. (28)

The reserve units, the 503d Parachute and 164th Regimental Combat Teams, were ordered to be prepared to reinforce the Americal Division on short notice from Eighth Army Headquarters. (29)

Our combat forces for the operation totalled 13,191 and consisted of the following units:

Americal Division (-164th Regimental Combat Team)	9,732
478th AAA AF Battalion (Batteries C and D)	408
746th AAA Gun Battalion	601
Company B, 716th Tank Battalion	160
52d Engineer Combat Battalion	605
542d Engineer B&S Regt (Det Hq & Hq Co, Cos A, B & D)	1,109
Company B (1 Platoon), 658th Amph Trac Bn	144
Company A, 80th Chemical Mortar Battalion	167
592d Jasco (Det)	250
14th Support Aircraft Party	15

In addition, 2,577 service troops were allocated to support the operation.

The naval force assigned to transport, land, and protect the landing force included the following:

- 5 Destroyers
- 4 Assault Personnel Destroyers
- 8 Minesweepers
- 17 Landing Ships (Tank)

(27, 28, 29) A-9, p. 56-57.

11 Landing Ships (Medium)

14 Landing Craft (Infantry)

By 21 March all elements of the force were loaded and the convoy moved to the southeast coast of Leyte to conduct landing rehearsals. (30)

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

The G-2 estimate prepared on 1 March 1945 indicated that there was a total of 11,500 Japanese in the areas involved in the Victor-II Operation. These included Cebu, Bohol, and Negros Oriental (Dumaguete area). The distribution of enemy forces was believed to be 10,500 on Cebu, 700 in the Dumaguete region on Negros, and 300 on Bohol. Of the garrison on Cebu, an estimated 8,750 were in the vicinity of Cebu City, extending along the coast between Tins-an on the south and Liloan to the north of the city. The remainder of the troops in Cebu were distributed in small garrison along the northeast coast. (31)

Of the total enemy strength involved in the Victor-II Operation, only 3,000 were believed to be combat troops. Seven hundred of these were in Dumaguete, with most of the remainder in and around Cebu City. The principal combat units were the 173d Independent Infantry Battalion, which was located in Cebu and estimated to be at full strength of 1,000, and portions of the 174th Independent Infantry Battalion at Dumaguete and San Carlos in Negros Oriental. Other identified units included about 800 troops of the 1st Division who were evacuated from Leyte in January and reached the vicinity of Tabogon on Cebu. Base defense and service units included such elements as the 36th Naval Guard Force, with an estimated strength of 300; the Hattori Ship Repair Unit, which was believed to have been organized for ground defense duties and assigned a coast defense sector; the Mizoguchi Unit, the 18th Shipping Engineer Regiment, and elements of the 106th Sea Duty Company.

Direct command of troops in this area was exercised by the 78th Brigade of the 102d Japanese Division. Headquarters, Army (Corps), was

(30) Eye witness, self; (31) A-2, p. 58.

also in Cebu and exercised overall command of the Visayas and Mindanao. This headquarters was believed to have lost many of its qualified personnel through the establishment of an echelon in Leyte. It was also reported to be preparing plans for movement to Mindanao should the situation require. (32)

Between the time of publication of this estimate and the date of our landing, no information was received to cause any change in the original calculations. Since the end of hostilities, information shows that the enemy's original strength in the areas involved in the Victor-II Operation had totalled about 22,000. The difference between this figure and the estimated 11,500 is accounted for chiefly by the presence of many elements evacuated from Leyte and service elements which were not detected prior to contact. (33)

Frequent punitive expeditions by the Japanese garrison had repeatedly disorganized and scattered the guerrilla units on Cebu, but they were regrouped early in 1944 under Lieutenant Colonel James Cushing. An intelligence net was developed, and an airstrip was established. Most of the island of Bohol was controlled by approximately 5,000 guerrillas, and the interior of Negros Oriental was held by a force of 2,000. (34)

NARRATIVE

February and March 1945 found the Americal Division actively engaged with the enemy on the west coast of Leyte. At this time, approximately one month before E-Day, the division received a warning order for the V-2 Operation. Plans were made to move the troops back to base camps for re-organization, equipment, and general orientation for the operation. 11 March found the 182d Infantry beginning their return move to Capoocan on Carigarro Bay and completing this move the following day. (35)

The brief staging period was conducted in a sea of mud at Capoocan. Plans and alternate plans were made and studied. Attached troops joined their respective Battalion Landing Teams and last minute arrangements were completed in so far as possible under the limited time allotted, and final plans were put into effect to disembark at Dulag, Leyte. (36)

(32, 33) A-1, p. 58-59; (34) A-1; (35, 36), Self.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION

The Americal was activated in May 1942, in New Caledonia. Sergeant David Fonseca, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, coined the name from the phrase, "Americans in New Caledonia". Task Force 6814 provided most of the original personnel. One regiment, the 164th, left the States in March 1942, joining the task force in New Caledonia in April 1942. (39)

The original components of the Americal Division were the 182d Infantry (Massachusetts National Guard); 164th Infantry (North Dakota National Guard); 132d Infantry (Illinois National Guard); 221st Field Artillery; 57th Engineer Combat Battalion; 26th Signal Company; 121st Medical Battalion; 125th Quartermaster (all Massachusetts National Guard); 245th Field Artillery, 246th Field Artillery, 247th Field Artillery, 721st Ordnance Company (all selectees); 21st Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (formed from other units within the division). (40)

The 164th Infantry led the division into combat, landing on Guadalcanal on 13 October 1942, to become the first Army ground unit to take the offensive in any theater of operations. The first heavy action against enemy troops came from the 23d to the 25th of October, when the Japs launched an all-out attack against the Henderson Field perimeter. The Americal Infantrymen, fighting in the sector later known as "Coffin Corner", were credited with preventing a break-through which would have seriously imperiled the American position in the Solomons.

After nine months of training in the Fiji Islands, the division returned to combat on Christmas Day, 1943, at Bougainville. Here it relieved the 3d Marine Division on the southern half of the Espress Augusta Bay perimeter, and began a gruelling jungle campaign that was to last nearly a year. (41)

In March 1944, the Imperial 17th Army spearheaded by the notorious 6th Division (Rape of Nanking) launched an offensive against the American perimeter in an effort to break through and seize the two strategic Bougainville airstrips. In three weeks of steady fighting, the Americal and
(39, 40) A-3; (41) Self.

the 37th Division killed nearly 10,000 Japanese. Focal point of the Americal's action was Hill 260, where in one attack, Company E of the 182d suffered 85% casualties. The company received a Presidential Citation for the action. (42)

Early in April the Japs retreated into the jungle, their main combat strength destroyed. Though cut off from supplies, they were still able to resist, and from April to early December, Americal troops probed deep into the mountainous interior, fighting constant patrol actions, and pitched battles centering around lines of communication. The division finally was relieved by Australian troops early in December 1944. (43)

Early in January the Americal embarked for Leyte. From 30 January to 22 March, the 164th Infantry and elements of the 182d and 132d attacked the last remaining Jap strongholds in the hilly northwest corner of the island, while at the same time, other division troops mopped up northern Samar, and invaded the small but strategic islands of Biri, Capul, Ticao, and Burias, in the San Bernardino Straits off the tip of southern Luzon. Units of the Americal also mopped up Pero Island in Cametes group. (44)

On 26 March 1945, the 132d and the 182d smashed ashore on Cebu to begin the toughest campaign in the division's history. Crossing heavily-mined beaches in the face of sporadic mortar fire, the doughboys swung north from Talisay, made a rapid five-mile advance, and captured Cebu City, second largest in the Philippines, on D-Day plus one. But then began three weeks of some of the toughest fighting of the Pacific War. Firmly entrenched in the hills north of the city, the Japs resisted fanatically from an elaborate system of pillboxes, caves and interlocking tunnels that honeycombed the mountains. Daily advances were measured in terms of yards. Early in April, the 164th landed on Cebu, executed a flanking movement to the south, and came up in the rear of the Japs dug in on Babag Ridge. This made the enemy position untenable, and on 18 April the Nips retreated to the north, leaving 5,000 dead on the battlefield. (45)

(42, 43, 44, 45) Self.

Through the rest of April, May, and June, the 182d and 132d fought Jap remnants on the northern tip of the island, while the 164th invaded and secured Bohol Island, invaded Negros Oriental, liberated Dumaguete then chased the Japs into the hills, and sent one battalion to Mindanao to operate with the 108th Regimental Combat Team of the 40th Division. Mactan and Cautit Islands in Cebu Harbor were seized by elements of the 132d soon after the initial invasion of Cebu itself.

On the first of September 1945, the division left Cebu, landing at Yokohama on the 8th. It was the first infantry division to arrive on the home islands by sea. There it garrisoned Yokohama and the areas adjacent to it on the north, west and the south. (46).

The division was deactivated upon ^{reaching the} hitting United States ~~sea~~ and consequently has the distinction of serving its entire existence overseas. As a matter of mention, the author was a member of the original Task Force 6814 and remained to assist deactivating the division. (47)

BRIEF REFERENCE TO HISTORY OF 182D INFANTRY

The 182d Infantry is the oldest regiment in the United States. It had its origin in 1636 when the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony ordered that all military men in Charlestowne (now Charlestown), Newtowne (Cambridge), Watertowne (Watertown), Concord, and Deddham (Dedham) be ranked into a regiment which was called the "North Regiment".

The regiment passed through several periods of evolution and emerged to fight in World War I as the Fifth Regiment (or the Dandy Fifth). (48)

In 1919 the regiment reverted to National Guard status and existed as such until inducted into Federal Service on 16 January 1941. (49)

The 182d Infantry was a member of the ^{first} 1st Division to be committed in an offensive action in this war during the Guadalcanal campaign. (50)

Then came the battle of Bougainville, the Leyte Campaign, and finally the V-2 Operation referred to in this monograph. (51)

(46, 47) Self; (48, 49, 50, 51) A-8.

Dawn of E-Day the 26 March 1945 was ushered into being with a terrific naval shelling and air bombardment concentrated on the compact Talisay Tanke area of the landing beach at Cebu, along with fierce rocket concentrations laid down from close-in gun boats. To the troops approaching the island, nothing could be seen but a flaming inferno continually erupting, sending great massive clouds of black smoke skyward. (52)

Landing preparations for the troops immediately became a reality. Amphibious landing craft and assault boats were milling about in the water receiving these respective landing teams. Fully loaded, boats and am-tracks moved out to the rendezvous area.

H-hour was rapidly approaching. (53)

The landing craft formed into their respective waves. Control boats started for the designated positions on the line of departure. The air force made the approach for the final strafing and bombing run, the assault gun boats rearing with rockets angled to the flanks, naval gun fire reached inland away from the beach and the assault was on. (54)

The assault waves reached the beach with clocklike precision, First and Third Battalions of the 182d Infantry on the left, one battalion of the 132d Infantry on the right. Immediately upon reaching the beach, the first amphibious landing craft was blown over on its side quickly followed by others. The majority of these amphibious landing crafts (LVT's) were knocked out of action. (55)

In spite of this unfavorable condition, the 182d Infantry drove the bulk of the enemy from positions on the plains south of Cebu City. As indicated, the devastating effects of naval shelling, rocket blasting, and aerial bombardments were not sufficient to neutralize the heavy automatic fire, small arms and mortar fire of Japs. In addition, this area was very heavily mined and aerial bombs fixed with parachutes dropped by friendly forces still clung to the coconut trees on the beach, creating a harassing element not previously anticipated. This obviously slowed the speed of the movement to the primary objectives. (56)

(52, 53, 54, 55, 56) Self.

The initial shock overcome, the troops pushed forward, dismounting from the disabled vehicles and advancing through these mine fields, the most devastating ever encountered by this regiment. (57)

Along Highway No. 1 delaying actions were overcome, and although it was necessary to reduce cement pillboxes and overrun concrete and steel tank barriers, all units reached their initial objectives by midafternoon against stiffening resistance. Meanwhile the 132d Infantry Combat Team moving along Highway No. 1 gave flank protection to this regiment from any possible enemy attempt to counterattack from Cebu City. (58)

The 2d Battalion, 182d Infantry, at this point was on the right flank of the regiment. Its mission was to seize the Provincial Capital of Cebu. The battalion moved out travelling approximately 2000 yards when stiff resistance was met and partly overcome. Orders were received to break contact and move on to the battalion objective. Breaking contact was not immediately possible but was accomplished, however, as darkness began to close in. At approximately 2200 an enemy counterattack was launched on a small scale against the battalion position at the sector held by Company G. This effort was frustrated and several enemy were killed and some weapons captured. (59)

On the 27th of March the 2d Battalion again moved out at dawn for the capital. Approximately 500 enemy were estimated defending the capital, so quite a fight was anticipated. The battalion moved out, E and F Companies forward, Company G in reserve. (60)

Several isolated positions were overrun and a large sized motor pool (including American trucks) were captured and finally the Provincial Capital was sighted 1000 yards away. E and F Companies were halted and G Company sent forward to capture the capitol. (61)

The terrain at this point was level except for the deep ravine-like banks of the Guadalupe River which constituted quite an obstacle. One outstanding bridge crossed the river at this point, but it was a natural trap.

(58, 58, 59, 60, 61) Self.

Plans were made to scale the banks of the river with a force large enough to cover the company's crossing. The river was found to be dry and after difficulty scaling the banks, a crossing was made. Enemy machine gun fire was delivered on the bridge which, incidentally, was protected by unoccupied concrete pillboxes. The capitol was taken and efforts were immediately made to secure the high ground west of the capitol.

After a brief engagement this was accomplished, but efforts to push further met with strong resistance. Naval gunfire was called upon and again Company G attacked making slight headway and receiving several casualties from mortar, artillery and machine gun fire. Once again naval gun fire was used within fifty yards of the troops and this time the attack was successful as all the commanding ground immediately adjacent to the capitol fell to Company G. (62) The capitol was secured and the remainder of the 2d Battalion moved up and extended the lines already established. (63)

During the night numerous counterattacks were repulsed and several artillery and mortar concentrations were laid down by the enemy with effective results. Many casualties were received by both sides but no ground was lost. The night of 27 March was spent by the 2d Battalion at the Provincial Capitol. (64)

The following morning, 28 March, Company G was relieved by Company F and given orders to move on Lahug airstrip. The company moved out immediately, only to be met by withering automatic fire from the left front. This was eliminated and Company E was placed on the right flank 500 yards to the rear of Company G. Because of the continual opposition, a platoon of M-7's were attached to Company G, and the advance proceeded more rapidly, aided by the terrific assault fire of the self-propelled 105's. (65)

Company G arrived at the approach to Lahug strip and deployed from platoons on line to skirmishes two forward and one back when suddenly friendly B-25's came in and made six strafing runs on Company G. This was over in a matter of seconds and the advance was continued. The strip was

(62, 63, 64, 65) Self.

captured along with the control tower and various other operating installations. (66)

Instructions were received by Company G to move down the strip and inspect for mines placed in the airfield itself. This activity was two-thirds completed when Lahug airstrip suddenly was swept with the combined fire of approximately 30 automatic weapons varying from 30 caliber to 20- and 40-mm. Mortar shells fell everywhere. The M-7's were supplemented by a platoon of tanks and finally Company G was able to make its way to the end of the strip and reach the banks of an unnamed river that flowed southwest from the Magiga River. This unnamed river had been established as the limit of advance for that day. (67)

However, the aggressive advance of Company G had been successful in attaining the objective in such an unexpectedly short time that the Battalion Commander enthusiastically ordered the Company Commander of Company G to prepare to move out, seize and secure the high ground overlooking the north end of Lahug airstrip (namely Hill No. 33.) (68)

One platoon of heavy machine guns (Company H), one platoon of tanks, and an artillery forward observation party were attached to Company G. This order was received at approximately 1130 and the company was instructed to "move out in one-half hour". The company unorganized under the harassment of this 20-mm fire, moved out on schedule with a hastily formulated plan of attack. No artillery was available and the author does not know the reason why, even at this date. (69)

The company moved out in an inverted wedge, the left platoon following the aforementioned unnamed river, and the right platoon following the Magiga. These river beds were flanked by the foliage of brush and trees affording cover and concealment for these platoons, which later proved very fortunate. The third platoon moved in the center protecting the tanks and guiding them to the objective. Approximately 400 yards from the objective, the center platoon contacted the apex of a double apron barbed wire entanglement, sown (66, 67, 68, 69) Self.

with partly concealed anti-personnel mines. The flank platoons were informed and by chance came in close proximity to the enemy gun positions which covered these obstacles. This resistance was eliminated, the obstacles reduced and the attack was launched, after a small preparation from the M-7's and under the support of the heavy machine guns and M-4's. (70)

The company quickly overran the positions and killed the remaining enemy. Then the enemy decided to do something about the situation. Enemy mortar fire fell like rain. Machine gun and small arms fire raked the recently taken objective inflicting many casualties on Company G. It was decided to continue on to the next hill and reduce these positions from which the firing was coming. This was attempted and accomplished, but the same situation existed, contributed by the increasing height of each subsequent hill. The terrain in the entire area covered by this narrative is typical of these same characteristics. As the attack progressed eastward, each hill was of sufficient height to support the other and harass attacking troops if occupied by the defender. This particular attack was made to determine the extent of the enemy occupation to the flank. (71)

The Battalion Commander was informed of the increasing casualties and instructed the company to remain on this second hill. Additional casualties proved that this hill was untenable, coupled with the fact that supporting weapons were unable to place fire in the well selected caves containing the enemy weapons and, as a result, it was necessary to withdraw to Lahug airstrip under cover of darkness. The company was included in the defense of the airstrip and all was quiet until approximately 0030. (72)

Previously in the afternoon of 27 March, it had been decided to send Company F up Bolo Ridge to reduce the effective flanking fire impeding Company G, but Company F arrived at a point previously reached by Company G's left platoon when taking the strip, and here F Company was halted. A tank section was sent to assist Company F and an advance of about 200 yards was made across low ground including a bridged waterless stream. (73)

(70, 71, 72, 73) Self.

The enemy in the meantime had infiltrated around the open flanks of Company F and demolished the bridge. The tanks, therefore, were forced to withdraw at nightfall by another route parallel to the route of advance. Arriving at this second bridge, antitank mines were encountered and the lead tank was crippled. The other tanks could not cross the bridge because of additional mines so they were forced to remain there for the night. Now the enemy was not known to be too active in this particular area although this later became one of our most difficult obstacles, and this information was initiated this night. The disabled tanks were attacked and Company G, minus one rifle platoon, moved out to reinforce the tank crews acting as security. That night of the 27 March and the following day were spent fighting an enemy that was invisible 75% of the time. (74)

Mid afternoon of the 28 March found the 1st Battalion moving up on the left of the 2d Battalion. The right flank company, namely Company A, found a hole and gained a hill (Watt Hill), the eastern slopes of which were causing so much trouble to the disabled tanks. After taking this hill, Company A immediately began consolidating the positions when a great roar shook the island. Complete obscurity followed. Nothing could be seen but great clouds of white sand pulverized to fine powder by the explosion. Troops 500 yards away were covered with this fine dust. Bodies, some dismembered, fell earthward out of the dust followed by their missing limbs. Fragmentary debris fell all around as far as 600 and 700 yards away. When the dust cleared, this former hill became visible, a great yawning hole was now what had formerly been the top of the hill. The hill had been literally disembowled. It looked like a great volcano at close range. Smoke continued to billow forth from the labyrinth of tunnels surrounding the base of the hills and the foothills immediately adjacent to this hill. Company A had been almost completely wiped out by this calamity. Even in time of war the author considers this a calamity. (75)

(74, 75) Self.

Company G was immediately sent to retake the hill and continue the attack. The psychological reaction at this time was tremendous. No one knew what had happened, and it is felt by the author that the men must always receive at least a partial explanation, but all were at a loss to explain what had occurred. (76)

Regardless, Company G's Commanding Officer went forward and encountered the Battalion Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion on this hill with ten volunteers. The volunteer presence of the Battalion Commanding Officer on this hill instantly following the explosion was, in the mind of the author, the most outstanding and effective effort to restore circumstances to any semblance of normalcy. (77)

Company G continued the attack which carried into the hours of darkness. Increasing resistance was encountered and increasing casualties forced a withdrawal to this blown-up hill, which had now been termed Watt Hill after Lt Colonel John Watt who performed this previous act of heroism. During the night, four successive explosions shook the hill and numerous counter-attacks were made by the enemy with little success. (78)

Intense mortar fire fell on Company G all during the night. In the morning, 30 March, numerous satchel charges and bangalore charges were found in the middle of our positions in the custody of their reduced bearers. (79)

The same morning saw a coordinated tank-infantry attack directed at Bolo Ridge which met with little success and a tremendous casualty toll. Companies E and I finally arrived at the extent of their costly advance and spent the night. The next day, Company G relieved I Company and continued the attack, supported by tanks. The formation at this time was G on the left, E center, and F on the right. F Company was forced by terrain and enemy resistance to the left and E Company squeezed out. The attack progressed and Bolo Ridge was gained. This was late in the afternoon and because of an inadequate number of tanks, it was necessary for the supporting (76, 77, 78, 79) Self.

tanks to return for fuel and arms. With the departure of these tanks, such withering fire was received from both flanks and frontally, coupled with concentrated mortar fire, that the advancing troops were unable to continue pressing forward. Efforts were made to dig in but the rocky surface could not be penetrated with the regular entrenching tools. A reorganization was immediately necessary but impossible under this enemy fire. Company G fell back to E Company's position and reoccupied the enemy entrenchments on this hill. All factors indicated that this hill could not be taken by the present approach, so additional plans were formulated. (80)

During the night additional enemy counterattacks were repulsed and friendly artillery was fired in front and in rear of the positions occupied by friendly troops. However, the positions dug by the enemy were in so deep this intentional bracket did no harm to friendly troops. (81)

The Company Commander, Company G, was called to Regimental Command Post for instructions for the day. At this time, Company G had two officers and approximately 85 to 90 enlisted men. (82)

The plan of the day was to have Company G, with additional troops, make a new effort 400 to 500 yards to the right of the effort made the day before. The troops involved were two understrength platoons from Company I, one understrength platoon from 1st Battalion, four M-7's and three M-4's in direct support. (83)

Troops were made ready and an artillery barrage was requested, but at this time of the campaign, only 18 rounds per gun were allowed per day, and as a result the preparation was insignificant. 4.2 chemical mortars filled the gap and the assault was successful. A foothold on Bolo Ridge was secured. Fifteen automatic weapons, 22-20-mm machine guns, numerous small caliber machine guns, plus multiple rifles and mortars were captured. Several minor explosions also took place when the fortified positions were burned out with flame throwers. The reason on this occasion was the stores of explosives used in 20 and 40-mm shell cases employed as high-powered grenades. In

(80, 81, 82, 83) Self.

addition, our assault was met by fixed bayonets in the hands of the defenders, some on rifles and others fashioned as crude spears on bamboo poles. The explanation for this is the fact that air corps and naval personnel with technical training were used to supplement the rifle troops and sufficient rifles were not available to all defenders. However, this situation served to multiply the number of machine guns by ten, namely guns taken from planes, dual purpose antiaircraft, etc. (84)

Company G was relieved by Company A, 132d Infantry, and went into reserve in the rear of the 3d Battalion, 182d, in the Guadalupe racetrack sector. During the night of 1 April, some 38 odd Japs were killed in attempted infiltrations. (85)

Two days were spent in combat patrols and reducing and demolishing concrete pillboxes threatening the left flank of the regiment. During this time, 50 enlisted men and 3 officers were assigned to Company G as replacements, bringing the strength to approximately 5 officers and 140 enlisted men. At this time the 2d Battalion was returned to the Bolo Ridge section and once again placed in the attack, this time in a coordinated effort by E, F, and G. Several hundred yards were gained with minor casualties. This action was slow and dogged and equally shared by all companies. (86)

To hasten the effort, our forces concentrated on the left flank where the 2d and 3d Battalions were to take a hill a day, beginning with the 3d Battalion on Hill 21. (87)

The attack was launched by the 3d Battalion on 11 April. The enemy repulsed all efforts and the fight continued through the 12th. Still no appreciable gain had been made and the Battalion Commander called for additional reserves. Company G was sent. This was at 1530 - 1600. Company G had about one hour of daylight when activity was delayed by darkness. The noticeable decrease in casualties and increased freedom of movement because of the darkness gave birth to a suggested night attack. The time now (84, 85, 86, 87) Self.

was about 2000. The still ^o active elements of the 3d Battalion were notified and time was taken for them to get in position. About 2400, the attack was launched on signal from the Commanding Officer of Company G. (88)

The line of departure was crossed and within seconds all was progressing well and Company G was moving forward shoulder to shoulder in order to maintain contact. Contact had not yet been established physically with the elements of the 3d Battalion, although the location of these units was known to Company G. About 2410 a brilliant naval flare illuminated the sky directly over the attacking elements. The enemy saw the wave of friendly troops and fired everything on the hill. Men fell on all sides and the assault was launched prematurely almost eliminating control. However, the first line of trench systems were gained at a terrific loss. The following morning, Hill 21 fell to Company G, which at this time totaled 31 men and one officer. (89)

It was later determined that this naval flare had been called for by guerrilla troops who were in rear of the 3d Battalion and, hearing the movement of troops, decided to see what was in front of them. They did.

(Author's note) (90)

Upon taking the hill, Company G was relieved and the following day the 2d Battalion moved out to take Hill 22. G Company was alerted but resting, since at this time the combat effectiveness of this unit was zero. The attack gained nothing until the following day. Stubborn resistance was met and in a coordinated tank-infantry attack, yards were slowly gained toward the objective. The end of the second day saw very little gain and the direction of attack had changed to the north because of terrain and resistance. (91)

It was decided now to use another company so Company G was augmented by 2 officers and 60 men from Company L, totaling a little better than 100 men and 4 officers. (92)

The makeshift company advanced slowly up this hill which was about 1100 feet in height, and by outstanding support from tanks and supporting weapons both in excellent firing positions, the hill was partly taken with minor casualties. Efforts to secure this hill met with fanatical resistance, as (88, 89, 90, 91, 92) Self.

we were now in the heart of the enemy defense system. The fall of Hill 21 penetrated the center of his defense but Hill 22 was the commanding ground looking down upon 60% of the enemy force. (93)

This hill must be taken. To relieve troops, the Regimental Commanding Officer ordered a makeshift company of clerks and cooks to fighting positions in the front lines. They arrived under the command of the Regimental Adjutant and the Personnel Officer as Executive Officer. They performed creditably in aggressive action. (94)

The fall of Hill 22 was followed by a rapid advance by Company G to Hill 24 and then on to the division objective under moderate resistance offered by a delaying action of the Japanese. The enemy main body had executed a large scale withdrawal north of Cebu City.

At this time the author became a Battalion Commander taking command of the 1st Battalion. In the first action commanded by the author, an MP Detachment of approximately 300, which had inflicted heavy casualties on the 3d Battalion was completely decimated by the 1st Battalion, suffering only 16 casualties. (95)

The remaining action on this island took place in the northern end of the island in the vicinity of the Tubuslan Sac Sac Road where the enemy was trapped and systematically destroyed until they were completely disorganized and of sufficient strength that the guerrilla forces could hunt them down and kill them. (96)

CITATION OF 182d INFANTRY REGIMENT

✓ "The 182d Infantry Regiment, United States Army, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy at Cebu, Philippine Islands, from 26 March to 18 April 1945. The citation is as follows:

Moving directly from a strenuous campaign in Leyte during which it sustained a high rate of casualties, the 182d Infantry made the main drive during the landing and subsequent operations on Cebu. This regiment, though understrength, was given the mission of clearing the heights dominating the City of Cebu. These heights were characterized by a series of bare, nearly (93, 94, 95, 96) Self.

vertical, hills progressively rising to a height of 1900 feet. The enemy had been preparing these hills for defense for two years and had completed a most elaborate system of mutually supporting, interconnecting caves, concrete pillboxes, and trenches. All avenues of approach were heavily mined and tank trapped and covered by mortars, machine-guns, 20mm and 40mm automatic cannon as well as by riflemen. The strength of the enemy force manning these defenses in the zone of action of the 182d Infantry was approximately 6500. Despite the fact that the regiment was initially 517 men understrength it pushed its assault vigorously and without respite for twenty-two days, repulsing repeated counterattacks and suicidal demolition parties until its deep penetration became the main factor which forced the withdrawal of the remaining enemy force. During this period every available man was used in the attack; company, battalion, and regimental headquarters, antitank, and service personnel were used as rifle company replacements. From 26 March to 18 April this regiment suffered 878 casualties and accounted for 1396 counted enemy dead." (97)

The regiment reorganized in bivouac at Lilcan northeast of Cebu City and made intensive preparations for the invasion of Kyushu. However, V-J day arrived and we went to Japan. (98)

Statement from General Douglas MacArthur:

To Major General Arnold, officers and men: "My heartiest commendation for the brilliant execution of the Visayan Campaign. This is a model of what a light but aggressive command can accomplish in rapid exploration." (99)

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The most outstanding feature of this entire operation was the intelligence information available. It was grossly incorrect and as such governed the size of the force thrown against the enemy and influenced to a great extent the tactics involved. At least initially this was true.

The initial estimate of the enemy strength was approximately 8000. This was proven later to be a vast understatement as the enemy on the island came

(97) A-10; (98) Self; (99) A-6.

closer to 20,000-25,000, In counted dead alone, the enemy suffered 9321 killed and 347 prisoners were taken. No effort is made here to establish the wounded casualties suffered by the enemy. Also at a later date following V-J Day, 6800 Japanese surrendered to the organization, of which the author was a member.

The excessive casualties suffered by this unit had a strong demoralizing effect on the combat troops and only the efforts of individuals influenced the continuance of the aggressive advance. Obviously there were numerous acts of individual heroism within the ranks and among troop leaders of company grade. In this respect the success of the operation speaks for itself. However, the author feels that the strongest influence of all on the success of the operation could be largely attributed to two men: Brigadier General Eugene Ridings, Assistant Division Commander, and Colonel Floyd E. Dunn, Commanding Officer of the 182d Infantry. Both men, by their continual presence in the active sectors, inspired the men. Perhaps that word inspired is too strong to the unacquainted reader, but let it be said that originally their presence was a challenge to produce but later when the success of the operation was in the balance, the author feels sure that it was the on-the-spot decisions of these two men that were largely responsible for success. They remained in close contact with the situation by personal observation. Just to mention one paramount instance wherein Colonel Dunn fashioned an aggressive combat unit from his rear echelon clerks and cooks under the command of his Adjutant, exemplifies the resourcefulness of which these men were capable. Their example in the mind of the author was an outstanding application of the principles of leadership moulded and converted to fit a situation. Exemplary actions by men in such elevated command positions as these are most certainly influential on the fighting spirit of a casualty-riddled unit.

Some platoon leaders sent to this organization as platoon leaders were not infantry officers but were tank platoon leaders or tank destroyer officers who had received a smattering of infantry indoctrinations and were considered

sufficiently trained to lead infantrymen. This was proven to be impractical by the number of reassigned officers who failed to manifest sufficient self-confidence to carry on in the face of combat conditions.

When an enemy has been located and his strength partially established, he should be annihilated at all material costs. Men should not be used when H. E. can be made available as in the case of the ridiculous ammunition allotment of 18 rounds per 105 per day.

It can also be mentioned that in the assault of fortified positions, the artillery serves only as a base of fire fixing the enemy in place and permitting maneuvers of friendly troops but any effective hit is purely a matter of relative chance.

Air ground liaison was wanting but this has now been rectified. The reason for the failure in this case was that the planes were based in Leyte.

At one stage the communication between tanks and infantry became so difficult to understand and manage that the tank platoon leader joined the Rifle Company Commanding Officer on the ground and this closer liaison proved much more productive. Both men had the same understanding and the tanker was able to express the desire of the Infantry Commanding Officer in a manner more readily understood by his own crewmen.

The existing conditions during the battle were such that at any time a sizeable enemy force could easily have pushed its way through to Cebu City and easily capture our supplies and wipe out our rear area installations. As it was, one infiltrating group did blow up an ammunition dump that was tremendously valuable.

The influence on the aggressive action of special troops cannot be mentioned too strongly.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Men should not be used when armor and H. E. are available.
2. Leadership in all its disguised forms is present in all men and needs only to be called upon by battle adversely to be realized, as in the

case of a bitter ex-noncommissioned officer who sacrificed personal feelings and performed heroically when no officers were left in his company (Company F). Even though his officers were not all battle casualties, he drew his source of leadership from the effect created by multiple casualties in his organization.

3. Smoke should not be relied upon unless it is plentiful at least in a 2 - 1 ratio to the amount needed, due to weather changes and shifting winds.

4. Mutually supporting positions must be assaulted by mutually supporting elements simultaneously if at all possible. A penetration on a small scale is suicide.

5. Protection of tanks by infantry can be carried to an extreme. It is felt by the author that the present tank infantry doctrine has eliminated this condition.

6. When prior reconnaissance can be made, it is mandatory that it should be accomplished. As in this case friendly forces (guerrillas) occupied parts of the island and American troops, namely the reconnaissance troops of division could have been sent ahead and no doubt the easy approach in rear of Babag Ridge finally used by the 164th Infantry would have been discovered.