

ANNEX II



332-2

G2 Report

10/17/76

ANNEX #2
G-2 REPORT

1. GENERAL:

The information of the enemy on LUZON and the terrain under his control was, prior to the Division's participation, of a general nature only. The employment of the Division in the LUZON campaign had been anticipated for a period of months, and much information concerning Order of Battle and general enemy activities throughout the island had been accumulated. During this period it was impossible to select any one area for a detailed study; either as to enemy activities or terrain. The information of the enemy received during this period came from periodic reports published by Headquarters Sixth Army, GHQ, SWPA, and terrain studies published by GHQ, SWPA. Upon the completion of the Leyte engagement on 7 January, 1945, a detailed study of the LINGAYEN GULF area was started; and the G-2 estimate of the enemy situation on LUZON, which had been prepared by G-2, Sixth Army, was utilized for orientation and briefing of all regimental and battalion S-2s.

2. INTELLIGENCE DURING PLANNING PHASE:

a. Training.

The intelligence organization of the 32d Division was constructed about veteran personnel. Practically all of the regimental and battalion S-2s had been extensively trained in intelligence schools in Australia, and had gained actual battle experience in the performance of their duties throughout the SAIDOR, AITAPE, and LEYTE engagements. Following each of these operations critique periods were held and, at the completion of the LEYTE campaign, a one week school was conducted which all of the S-2s attended. At this school the problems encountered and procedures developed during the LEYTE campaign were discussed and critiqued, and plans were formulated for the intelligence operations during the coming LUZON campaign. Specialized training of intelligence agencies, I & R platoons, and the 32d Division Reconnaissance Troop was conducted after each of the operations mentioned, in an effort to correct the deficiencies noted during those operations, although following the LEYTE campaign this training was limited by the time factor. Again the Division was fortunate in having these reconnaissance agencies largely comprised of trained personnel.

b. General Information of the Enemy:

As soon as the Division was alerted for its movement to LUZON a complete last minute orientation on the disposition of enemy forces on the island was given to all S-2s, with emphasis placed on the areas in which it was believed the Division might be committed. A complete distribution of terrain studies and terrain hand books was made to all subordinate units. During the weeks' schooling a brief period was devoted each morning to information and discussion of the current progress of our troops, and the opposition they were receiving on LUZON.

3. INTELLIGENCE DURING THE OPERATION:

a. Problems Encountered,

- (1) Maps: Landing on LUZON on 27 January 1945, the Division rapidly advanced across all of its area of operation which had been adequately mapped. By the 5th of February, leading elements of the Division were probing into the mountains along the southern end of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL. This area had not been properly or correctly mapped, and it was approximately fifteen days before the Division was able to receive even partial photography of the area in which it was fighting. The only available map of the area was one of a scale of 1,250,000 which was entirely unsuitable for the use of small units. It was necessary for the Aerial Photo Interpretation Team, attached to the Division, to prepare 1,10,000 maps of the area in which the troops were engaged with the enemy. These maps proved highly satisfactory from a standpoint of accuracy and detail, but reproduction facilities limited the number available for distribution. As the operation progressed 1,50,000 maps were prepared by Corps Engineers. The quantity of these maps was always ample but the quality and accuracy left much to be desired, and the Photo Interpretation Team of this Division and the G-2 sections of the regiments continued to prepare maps of approximately 1,10,000 scale of the operational area. This expedient proved satisfactory until the enemy's main line of resistance was encountered in the SALACSAC PASS #1 and #2 area. Here the contoured maps in scale of 1,10,000 or 1,50,000 did not furnish the amount of detail needed for a coordinated attack on the enemy's defensive positions. The Division API Team prepared a photo mosaic map, scale 1,10,000, which was printed by Corps Engineers. This map was later improved by overprinting hill numbers upon it, which did much to provide closer coordination between units during the engagement. It is felt that in future operations where the enemy is offering a strong resistance, a map of this nature should be prepared immediately upon encountering the enemy's main defensive installations.

- (2) Air: As in previous operations where the enemy chose to defend in mountainous jungle terrain, aerial reconnaissance was found to be of little value. High speed planes were unable to detect movements, positions, or installations in this type of terrain. As the enemy was aware of our air superiority, he did not conduct troop or supply movements of any consequence during daylight hours. On those air missions requested, observations made were not reported directly to the Division and the information gathered was known only when it appeared in Army G-2 Reports received an average of two days after the observation. As it happened, there were no instances in which the information obtained required any specific action on the part of the Division. But, had there been such sightings, the delay in receipt of the information

would not have permitted prompt, effective ground action. Cub planes were likewise unable to provide much information of the enemy's activities. Although these planes were kept over the enemy's area continually, they seldom made sightings of any consequence. Occasionally they would detect scattered troop movements, but these enemy groups quickly dispersed into the dense growth. It was difficult to get a comprehensive intelligence picture from these cub sightings.

- (3) Ground patrols in the VILLA VERDE TRAIL Operation, As in all previous engagements in which this Division has participated, it was found that the most dependable sources of information to a G-2 are the ground patrols probing into the enemy's position. In no other engagement has the necessity for trained patrol leaders been so apparent. Many junior officers of the Division were lost during the engagement; casualties, promotions, transfers, and rotation were responsible for a large turnover in patrol leaders. As these trained junior officers disappeared, the efficiency of our scouting and patrolling diminished rapidly, and grew progressively worse as the engagement continued. Under combat conditions it is conceivably possible that any man in a unit may become the commander of that unit. Unless all men are thoroughly trained to accept this responsibility, the leadership they can give is of negligible value. Thorough training in scouting and patrolling is of vital importance, and the importance of junior leadership can not be rated too highly. In this operation the Division was opposed by an enemy who was fully aware of the value of counter-reconnaissance, and who had troops available to maintain an effective counter-reconnaissance screen through which only the most determined patrols could penetrate. Small patrols appeared to have more success at penetrating this screen, but lacked determination in reaching distant objectives. Larger patrols most often became engaged on the line of enemy outposts. Small patrols usually consisted of one to three men accompanied by one to six Filipino civilians, or guerrillas. The larger reconnaissance patrol varied in size from eight to fifteen men. The distances that patrols were able to cover depended primarily on the type of terrain in which they were operating. Some patrols were able to move five or six miles in a day while in other cases 2000 yards through densely forested mountains was considered good going. Night patrolling in this particular engagement was not successful. It was attempted in a number of cases, but usually the patrols were detected and drew fire, or were driven off prior to reaching a point from which they could accomplish their mission. Generally, night patrolling in jungle terrain has proved unsatisfactory.
- (4) Documents, Captured documents were of immediate and primary importance throughout the operation. The enemy policy of committing his troops in a piecemeal manner, mixing line and service troops indiscriminately, made captured documents the only reliable

basis for any overall estimate of strength or dispositions. The Order of Battle, Inclosure 8, to this report outlines the composition of these enemy forces; information which would have been impossible to compile without access to Japanese records.

The great difficulty in obtaining documents during the operation was the fact that the Division, generally speaking, is no longer "souvenir conscious". A unit in battle for the first time avidly collects everything. The men of the 32d Division, having had five operations in which to obtain souvenirs, have become careless in searching enemy dead. It became necessary, towards the end of the operation, to check individually as to whether each Jap killed had been searched. It was found profitable to establish ambush patrols for the purpose of killing messengers and securing the documents which they carried; in one instance important Jap messages signed as late as 1130J in the morning were captured, translated and in the Division Commander's hands by 1600J that afternoon.

- (5) Prisoners of War, During the one hundred and twenty days of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL operation, the 32d Division killed over eight thousand and nine hundred Japs, and captured fifty two prisoners. Roughly, this is a ratio of one PW for every one hundred and seventy-five enemy killed. This is consistent with our previous experiences in attempting to secure prisoners. Japanese soldiers prefer to die rather than be captured. Ambush sites were established, and patrols manned these ambushes for as long as ten days at a time without securing a prisoner. Japs were in the area and used the trails which were ambushed, but when capture became imminent they destroyed themselves, or were killed in the ensuing fight. As in past operations, the bulk of prisoners captured were sick or wounded and had been away from their units for ten to fifteen days, and were able to provide little information of tactical importance. Thousands of surrender and propaganda leaflets were dropped by plane and some leaflets were also fired into enemy positions in 105mm projectiles, but of the fifty-two prisoners captured during the operation, only three indicated that they had been influenced by the contents of the surrender leaflets.

b. Employment of the Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop;

During the initial stages of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL Operation, the 32d Reconnaissance Troop was employed on an independent reconnaissance mission. The Troop was based in the vicinity of VALDEZ and DEPALO, far to the east of our advanced elements, then operating in the SANTA MARIA and NATIVIDAD areas. The Troop established a perimeter on the crest of a mountain ridge overlooking Highway #5. From this point it maintained observation posts and dispatched patrols to Highway #5 to harass enemy forces moving north along the Highway. Throughout this mission the Troop gained much valuable information concerning enemy movements and placed highly effective artillery fire on the enemy personnel and supply trains. The Troop remained in this advanced area for approximately a month and was then withdrawn for a short period of rehabilitation. It was later dispatched on a similar mission to the other flank of the Division, north of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL. On this flank the enemy had established a most effective

counter-reconnaissance screen, and the Troop was able to penetrate this screen with only one or two very small patrols. The aggressiveness of the enemy in this area prohibited the Troop operating from a base, as it had on the other flank. After two weeks of unsuccessful attempts to reach the enemy's inner zone, the Troop was moved into the front lines of the forward infantry units where it was used to supplement the combat reconnaissance of the infantry. The Troop continued on this mission until the end of the operation and, although its performance was outstanding in the execution of these close-in reconnaissance patrols, it did not accomplish as much for the overall picture of the operation as it had while conducting the independent long range missions earlier in the campaign. When operating within an infantry zone of action the possibility of masking infantry-supporting artillery fire is always present. For this reason a reconnaissance troop operating on such a mission should be attached to the infantry regiment for closer coordination and control.

4. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED;

a. Maps;

- (1) Early and aggressive action should be taken by the Division G-2 to obtain maps and photography of the area in which the Division is operating. Initial successes in an operation may exceed expectations, and a commander may soon find his troops out of the area which has been correctly mapped. Proper coordination of a military operation can not be achieved without accurate maps. The Division G-2 Section is capable of producing limited numbers of fairly accurate maps of a large scale, but it can not produce maps in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of a moving Division.

b. photography;

The value of aerial photography in mountainous terrain can not be over emphasized. At least two sets of photos per infantry battalion and five sets per artillery battalion are needed for initial terrain studies. In a static situation re-runs should be made of the enemy's area at least once a week and distribution should be made to Division Artillery Hq and each artillery battalion. Oblique photography was not found highly useful in this operation although the Division Artillery Hq should be equipped with a K-17 camera to permit taking oblique pictures of pinpoint targets from artillery observation planes.

c. Ground patrols;

Emphatic orders should be issued and definite missions assigned ground patrols; the accomplishment of these missions should be aggressively and constantly checked by the Regimental S-2. Trained leaders are a necessity for successful patrolling.

d. The Division Reconnaissance Troop should be used on Independent Missions;

A G-2 is wasting one of the best long range reconnaissance agencies at his disposal when he uses the Troop to conduct close-in combat reconnaissance which can be conducted by infantry patrols.

e. Captured documents are a valuable source of information, but the documents will not be collected by lower echelons without constant and vigorous supervising action by higher headquarters.

- (1) Patrols and ambushes should be dispatched with the specific mission of getting documents carried by messengers.
- (2) Ascertain that every Jap killed, or every CP overrun is searched thoroughly for documents.

JAPANESE DEFENSIVE TACTICS ALONG THE VILLA VERDE TRAIL

For the past six months, throughout the entire theater, the enemy has seriously studied defense tactics. On Leyte his defense in depth, though hastily constructed, indicated that he was gradually realizing the waste and futility of the Banzai attack. Japanese operations along the VILLA VERDE TRAIL were almost entirely defensive. The terrain throughout this area was ideally suited for such warfare. The sharp, knife-edged ridges and the heavily wooded ravines afforded the enemy ample opportunity to construct elaborate defensive installations. The Jap divided his zone of action into an outpost line, a main line of resistance and rear areas. The outpost line consisted of a series of well emplaced, strongly held ridge positions, mutually supporting each other by fire. These positions were so located that they commanded the approach routes to the main line of resistance. Each outpost was in itself a defensive island, with its own supply and ammunition reserve within its perimeter.

The main line of resistance extending generally North and South through the SALACSAC PASS area was an enlargement of the Jap outpost plan and was constructed along a backbone of high ridges. Each hill was honeycombed with caves and emplacements. Not only were these defenses used as firing points, but living and working quarters were built underground and in many instances the positions were constructed so that the enemy might go from one to another without even appearing above the ground. Supplies were stored in these caves and many offset tunnels were dug to give additional protection. The enemy established artillery pieces within these caves, rolling the piece to the cave mouth to fire and then withdrawing the gun into the interior. These tactics made a direct hit by our counter-battery fire necessary in order to neutralize the enemy piece.

In his rear areas the Japs attempted to build up large quantities of supplies and ammunition. Apparently realizing that he would be unable to maintain his supply lines in the face of our air power and artillery fire, he stored as much military materiel as possible immediately behind his defense positions during the early stages of the operation. He utilized all available manpower throughout the engagement as carrying parties, in an effort to supplement these supply dumps.

The enemy resisted bitterly from each successive terrain feature, as his outposts were slowly pushed back towards his main line of defense. He invariably counterattacked each newly won perimeter, often making three or four assaults in one night. These attacks were seldom in force; usually consisting of small groups, armed with hand grenades and demolitions and supported by one or two light machine guns. He defended his main line of resistance with fanatical zeal. Each enemy strongpoint fought to the last. The Jap remained in his cave or emplacement until he was destroyed or buried alive by demolition charges.

For the first time the 32d Division was confronted with massed Jap artillery. Early in the fight for the trail, the Japs would cease artillery fire whenever our planes were in position to adjust counter-battery. As the operation progressed and the attack against the main line of resistance began, this caution was disregarded and Japanese artillery fire became increasingly heavy. Throughout the entire operation the enemy maintained observation posts on the high YAMASHITA RIDGE to the North; and their artillery fire was constantly

accurate. There was also evidence that the Jap had pre-adjusted on many of his outpost hills. Invariably, our units closing in on these positions, received accurate surprise concentrations placed indiscriminately on both our own and enemy troops. Observer-battery communication was apparently more efficient during this operation than at Leyte, for here the Jap was often able to interdict supply and litter trains with surprise fire.

The Japanese attempts at offensive action consisted primarily of small counter-attacks and suicide infiltration raids. His counter-attacks, usually launched in the early morning or at dawn, were for the most part disorganized and poorly executed. These were conducted by small groups and intended to feel out and harass our perimeters. The suicide and raiding parties were designed to work well within our rear areas and intended to destroy artillery positions or various other rear installations. These also had little more than a nuisance value, although captured documents indicate that the Jap command considered them very effective. The flowing reports turned in by those members of these raiding parties who were fortunate enough to return to their base evidently convinced the Japanese command post that they were inflicting extreme damage, and may partially account for the prevalence of such raids.

It is difficult to understand why the enemy failed to utilize the sizeable unit he maintained in the YAMASHITA RIDGE area. It was impossible for us to disregard this as a potential striking force, although, except for scattered small infiltration or suicide parties, the unit was at no time offensively minded. Had it been so, the Jap could have immeasurably hindered our movement, and possibly placed and held a strong road block on the trail itself. Instead, the enemy appeared satisfied to spasmodically interdict the trail with long range machine gun fire, and throw back our probing patrols investigating his positions. Probably the many small suicide parties dispatched from the YAMASHITA RIDGE unit were sent out in an effort to eliminate names from the ration list, rather than with any expectation of materially injuring our rear installations. Such units were not expected to return.

In addition to his heavy artillery, the Jap employed 90mm mortar and flat trajectory 47mm fire as support for his operations. The 90mm mortar was an effective weapon and the Jap proved to be very accurate with it. This mortar was highly respected by our troops. The 47mm AT gun was used for placing interdicting fire on the trail and on our supply trains. The Jap also employed it for harassing fire on our perimeters and patrols. This weapon was not considered to be too effective by our troops, as a foxhole or cave provided adequate protection from its fire.

Generally speaking, the enemy defensive scheme along the VILLA VERDE TRAIL was sound. Its downfall was due primarily to a break down in his supply system, a delay in reinforcing vulnerable positions, and a piece-meal commitment of reserves when he deemed their employment necessary. He failed to fully exploit our extended supply lines, and wasted his manpower in ineffective suicide raids. His strategic positions in the trail area were gradually outflanked by our advances along Highway #5 and in the BAGUIO area. All these factors combined to neutralize his position and led eventually to the downfall of his entire defensive system along the VILLA VERDE TRAIL.

32d COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS DETACHMENT
REPORT

Members of the 32d Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment moved from LEYTE to LUZON with the 32d Division. The detachment was subdivided into a headquarters section, which traveled with Division Headquarters, and three regimental sections, each of which traveled as a part of the headquarters of one infantry regiment.

On 30 January 1945, the sections with the 127 and 128 Infantry Regiments moved to the BINALONAN, PANGASINAN area, following closely after the combat troops of the Division as they moved through the newly liberated towns of BINALONAN, ASINGAN and SAN MANUEL, and quickly liberated SAN NICOLAS, TAYUG, NATIVIDAD and SAN QUINTIN. In each of these towns, the agents of the detachment searched all municipal buildings, former Japanese installations, and homes of puppet municipal officials for documents of tactical or counter intelligence value.

One Japanese document found in the municipal building at TAYUG was headed "Sketch of Secret Agents Network". It consisted of a sketch map of eastern PANGASINAN, with names of Filipinos who supposedly acted as informers for the Japanese written on the map. Investigations of all persons listed disclosed that these men were considered by the Japanese garrison commandor to be trusted agents. Actually, all were either guerrillas or working closely with guerrillas, and reporting false information to the Japanese.

Shortly after the liberation of these towns, many civilians returned from their hiding in the country and the hills. The CIC, after running loyalty checks on all prominent personalities, appointed temporary local governments to function until PCAU units arrived.

During the first days in the sector, contacts were made with guerrilla officers, and much information regarding the activities of local citizens during the occupation was obtained. Tactical commanders were assisted in organizing road blocks to prevent unauthorized movement of civilians into enemy territory.

As the initial security phase finished, the work of thoroughly investigating persons charged with aiding the enemy began. It was found that a large number were guilty of dignified acquiescence; that relatively few had practiced wholehearted collaboration. There were considerably fewer Japanese sympathizers in this sector than in other adjacent territories; the main reason probably being the proximity of mountainous country, which permitted guerrilla groups a chance to disperse, yet still maintain a close watch over the sector. The Sakdal-Ganap, Makapili, or Hukbalahap movements had no strength in this territory.

One source of information was a guerrilla intelligence group consisting of Igorot civilians from NUEVA VISCAYA PROVINCE headed by Lt. Rufino F. Mejia. These men made frequent trips to NUEVA VISCAYA and returned with much tactical and counter intelligence information. Several air strikes were made against enemy targets located by this group.

The detachment processed a large number of evacuees from

BENGUET and NUEVA VISCAYA PROVINCES and issued about four hundred transportation passes to members of the Philippine Army and Constabulary, authorizing them to proceed to replacement centers and other military locations. At the request of the A C of S, G-2, detachment personnel also assisted in the administration of guerilla units attached to the Division.

Through-out the operation, periodic checks were made on the security of command posts and headquarters. Educational programs, designed to teach civilians how they could help in securing the military mission, were carried out.

The campaign just finished offered many problems new to CIC in this Division. In the New Guinea campaign there were no civilian problems, and the primary mission of the CIC was maintaining security of information among troop units and assisting in the collection of documents. In LEYTE, the Division operated in lightly populated areas and CIC functions were not greatly expanded over New Guinea. In LUZON, however, a thickly populated area was recovered from the Japanese, who for three years had attempted to impress their way of life upon the inhabitants. It was necessary to use to full advantage the training provided CIC agents, in order to secure the military mission against espionage and sabotage activities of enemy collaborationists. The Division CIC team, although for the most part inexperienced in this type of work, quickly learned methods and procedures necessary for dealing with the situation.

The past campaign pointed out several considerations which must be kept in mind in future operations. The work with evacuees proved that valuable tactical information can be obtained from civilians, providing the agent can intelligently sift the truth from non-essential rumors or guesses. A great deal of difficulty was encountered in getting true and exact information from Filipinos. Their stories are very apt to be swayed by personal enmity, political animosity, sectional rivalry and imagination. It was soon learned that it was necessary to thoroughly cross examine all informants to get accurate details. It is absolutely essential that agents keep abreast of the tactical situation in order to intelligently accomplish their mission.

171st LANGUAGE DETACHMENT REPORT

1. THE OPERATION:

The VILLA VERDE TRAIL operation, from the standpoint of the Language Detachment, was unique. This was due to a multiple of circumstances, such as, terrain, length of the operation, enemy dispositions, heterogeneous units employed by the enemy, technique of using code names for positions and the quantity and quality of both prisoners of war and captured documents. All of the above were peculiar to this operation and to the Language Detachment. This engagement brought forth all of the various ramifications that may ever be encountered by language specialists. Excellent accomplishments were attained and numerous quandries, satisfactorily terminated, taught excellent lessons. The function of the Detachment was to translate captured enemy documents and interrogate prisoners of war. The primary purpose being the obtaining of enemy intelligence that is of tactical value to our forces and disseminating this material in an accurate and rapid manner. In this connection, the Language Detachment reports formed a large portion of the G-2 Periodic.

2. PRISONERS OF WAR:

a. Difficulties Involved,

During the VILLA VERDE TRAIL operation, a host of problems occurred in connection with Japanese POW. Firstly, they were difficult to obtain. In the four months of the Division's commitment, a total of only fifty-one POW were taken. The first fifteen POW were from sectors other than the VILLA VERDE TRAIL. However, much important information was obtained from the early prisoners of war in connection with the LAMAYABANG RIVER, TEBBO area that was of importance to the 126th Infantry, at that time advancing up the western part of the Division sector. To one who is familiar with the extremely difficult terrain -- especially in the VILLA VERDE area, it is quite understandable why prisoners of war were a rarity and difficult to procure. Not only did the enemy have command of the high ground, in the most rugged terrain yet encountered in this war, but he was also well imbued with a "do and die" spirit and had been well indoctrinated in the Jap theory that U.S. Forces would torture and kill prisoners of war. These factors no doubt played a major part in the scarcity of prisoners of war. Many prisoners inquired of interrogators when they were to be killed, and when assured they would be accorded good treatment found it difficult to believe. The number of prisoners of war who voluntarily surrendered was almost nil, the total being three. Many had read propaganda leaflets but did not react favorably. Our troops were made aware of the value of prisoners of war, and were given an incentive in the form of a pass for capturing prisoners of war, and this undoubtedly added to the Division's small total. One sergeant captured a prisoner on three different occasions.

b. Quality and condition,

Secondly, the physical condition of the prisoners of war in this operation was particularly poor. Of the total of fifty-one, thirty-three were either sick or suffering from wounds, in many instances both were involved. Six prisoners of war out of this thirty-three died, either before interrogation could be completed or shortly thereafter. Malaria and beri-beri were the principal diseases encountered. Many prisoners of war had received no Japanese medical

aid and were sorely in need of attention. They expressed profound gratitude for the U.S. medical treatment which they received. Due to their poor condition, interrogations were carried out under the most extreme difficulties, often en route to and at the hospitals. Every effort was always made to obtain a complete and accurate report. This often took an unusually long period as many prisoners of war had to undergo surgery, and the majority had great difficulty in conversing or in examining maps.

c. Information derived;

In the majority of cases, prisoners of war were cooperative and gave what information they possessed freely. Many had not been in the sector long and as a large portion of their movements were carried out at night, their knowledge of the sector was below average. Due to the heterogeneous composition of their units, it was difficult for them to determine accurately the various commands. The total prisoners of war represented over thirty-five different units which included Infantry, Air Signal, Motor Transport, Meteorological, Provisional Units, Anti-tank, Naval Air, Line of Communication, Civilian Veterinarian attached to 14th Area Army Hq, Mobile Infantry, armored Units, Railroad Units, and Mobile Artillery. Truly, a cross-section of the enemy forces opposing the Division in this operation. In this respect, it differed greatly from the LEYTE operation, as here we encountered units of bastard composition, whereas in LEYTE, it followed the pattern of the Jap 1st Division with which we were primarily engaged. Two-hundred eighty-seven officer personalities from these assorted units were obtained from prisoner of war interrogations.

Much vital information was derived, particularly regarding the heterogeneous units, their composition, disposition, armament, and morale. Dispositions played an important role, as always, and the Jap technique of using various names for positions in lieu of the coordinate system made the determining of locations of enemy units from documents and prisoners of war extremely difficult. Probably no single element in this operation was of greater importance, from an intelligence standpoint.

The average prisoner of war's comments on the following were;

- U.S. Mortar Fire - Extremely effective.
- U.S. Artillery Fire - Effective.
- U.S. Bombings - Not effective.
- Jap Communications - Poor; primarily by runners, a few telephones and radios are used between high echelons.
- Jap Supplies - Poor in food, good in ammunition, and poor in medicine.
- Jap Morale - Poor in many cases, but all apparently determined to "do and die".

During the operation, one-hundred sixty-two pages of prisoner of war interrogations were published including ten sketches.

d. Excerpts from PW interrogation;

PW #18030 - a 2nd Lt liaison officer and acting adjutant who surrendered, stated that more than one-half of the casualties suffered were due to artillery action. Most of it occurred while men were digging positions. Once dug-in, the men were fairly safe. However, the fear of artillery action, when cub planes were overhead, caused a

strain on the men. The men were fairly safe from bombings, for the sound of the planes could be heard. Casualties only occurred when direct hits were made. Morale is low but the men intend to fight to the end. Prisoner of war had seen many propaganda leaflets, but could not agree with the propaganda. He believed that the soldier is too seasoned for the psychology used. When told of Germany's surrender, prisoner of war thought that such news might impress the soldiers of the futility of further fighting.

3. TRANSLATION OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS;

Captured enemy documents in this operation were rich in enemy information. Most fruitful were operational orders, diaries, administrative journals, and unit identifications. At this point, it must be shown that the enemy is becoming more security conscious in each successive operation. More documents were received in the past operation bearing the classification, "Most Secret", "Destroy after Reading", and with the distribution showing that the orders were to be given orally; and other security precautions, than had ever been previously captured. Many documents were undated and their condition in several instances was poor.

a. Maps and sketches;

Probably the most significant documents captured were enemy maps and sketches. These proved to be extremely valuable as they were accurate and up to date. Without them, much important information gained from documents would have been of lesser value, as these maps disclosed the location of code name positions which were referred to in the documents. They were of great aid in orienting prisoners of war, and revealing routes of supply, movements of troops, and trails. In many respects, such as trails and streams, they proved to be more accurate than U.S. maps. The average Japanese soldier is well-trained in mapping and has a natural ability to sketch. Several prisoners of war sketched maps for interrogators, showing dispositions and routes. Some excellent sketch maps were obtained which disclosed the deployment of the enemy's artillery in the Division sector, labeled, "Top Secret, to be burned in case of emergency". Sketches formed a part of numerous operational orders.

b. Diaries;

Many diaries contained information of operational orders, strengths, positions, personalities, troop movements, rations, equipment, ammunition, medicine, and morale. They also made numerous mentions of U.S. air attacks, artillery fire, and the general effect of U.S. tactics, especially our firepower.

c. Operational orders;

Translations of operational orders in this operation revealed a wealth of tactical enemy information. Many were of very recent date and contained intelligence of immediate value, others although dated earlier, were fruitful in revealing personalities, units, movements, supplies, and morale.

d. Publication of translations;

The 171st Language Detachment published over five-hundred fifty-three pages of translations during the VILLA VERDE operation.



This included the reproduction of sixty-nine sketches. The translations were divided as follows;

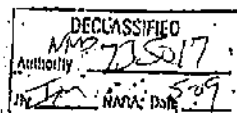
Ninety-one complete translations of operational orders and diaries.

One-hundred sixty-four extracted translations of operational orders and diaries.

Nine-hundred ten identifications of units.

4. PROPAGANDA:

The sector was well covered with leaflets, including the "parachute News", "I Cease Resistance", "Fall of Europe", and various other types. These were dropped on concentrated areas by sub planos. Propaganda leaflets were also fired at specific enemy pockets by 105's. However, in this particular sector, the enemy appeared to be offensive, rather than surrender-minded and leaflets did not bring the desired results. Some prisoners of war had seen and read leaflets but their reactions were not favorable. However, it is believed that leaflets in certain areas dropped at the opportune time and containing a correct and timely appeal will be productive in further operations.



8th ORDER OF BATTLE TEAM REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

Having landed on Luzon Island at LINGAYEN Gulf on 29 January, the U.S. 32nd Infantry Division pushed to the east and established contact with the enemy at the foot of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL in PANGASINAN Province. Identification discs and miscellaneous papers picked up by our troops racing through TAYUG and SANTA MARIA, before contact had actually been established with the enemy, provided the first clues in identifying the Jap force confronting us. On 8 February the first important enemy documents fell into our possession--a bound file of Operational Orders, dated as late as 4 February--which disclosed that the Jap force defending the VILLA VERDE TRAIL was the 10th Rcn Regt, reinforced by the remnants of of the 3rd Tank Brigade (ISHIKAWA Unit). This composite force was known both as the SUZUKI Detachment and the RIGHT DISTRICT UNIT; it was under the able command of Major SUZUKI, Shigetada. The responsibility of this enemy force included both the VILLA VERDE TRAIL and the AMBAYABANG River bed. Our forces pushing up the ARBOREDO River Valley were confronted by elements of the Japanese 23rd Division. Action in this area was confined by the very nature of the precipitous terrain to long-range patrolling and probing activity. By the end of February the enemy had established three main defense sectors: one, just to the west of the AGNO River; one, along the AMBAYABANG River; and still another force guarding the all-important VILLA VERDE TRAIL. From the very beginning the enemy resisted our advance up the Trail with the most fanatical kind of resistance from Major SUZUKI's 10th Rcn Regt, while Major ISHIKAWA's 3rd Tank Brigade remnants were effecting a delaying action along the AMBAYABANG River.

The fight was bitter and slow along the Trail with the enemy contesting every inch of ground until 22 February, when SUZUKI's Right District Unit was forced to withdraw to the vicinity of No. 2 SALACSAC Pass. By this time the SUZUKI Detachment had been practically annihilated. During the latter part of February reinforcements from the 39th Regt of the Jap 10th Division arrived and enemy strength on the Trail was built back up to 1000 men. Over in the ARBOREDO River sector our troops were still confronted by the left flank of the enemy 23rd Inf Division outposting the mountains north of ANSAGAN, while the ISHIKAWA Force along the AMBAYABANG River had been reduced to 150 men. The 14th Area Army Commander, General YAMASHITA, realized the seriousness of the threat to SANTA FE from the VILLA VERDE TRAIL and sent more reinforcements from the Philippine Railroad Unit, which had been previously engaged in anti-guerrilla warfare in the vicinity of BAMBANG-ARITAO. By 18 March the 3rd Tank Brigade remnants had been annihilated, so the enemy rushed his 16th Rcn Regt and the 5th Co of the 10th Tank Regt from BAGUIO to ITOGON in an effort to thwart our advances up the AMBAYABANG River. At the same time the defense of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL was put into the hands of Lt General IWANAKA of the 2nd Armored Division, who brought with him the 10th Tank Regt and the 4th Bn of the 10th FA Regt. Lt Col HARADA, CO of the 10th Tank Regt, replaced Major SUZUKI as the CO of the Right District Unit. Our troops continued to whittle down the enemy who was defending SALACSAC Pass No. 2, which provided the most favorable kind of terrain, but despite severe casualty losses the Japs managed to keep a strong front-line force by filtering in reinforcements. In early April the MINE Force (a provisional infantry unit made up from members of the 2nd Air

Division) arrived, building the enemy strength back up to 1800. Elements of ten major Jap units had been contacted on the VILLA VERDE TRAIL by this time. A week later the 2nd Bn, 11th Ind Inf Regt, of the 28th Division also arrived on the scene. In mid April the U.S. 33rd Inf Division took over the responsibility for the area west of the AMBAYABANG, giving the 32nd Division the chance to throw its entire might into the VILLA VERDE TRAIL, which was being defended at this time by 1800 Infantry troops and supported by an artillery strength of 900.

On 22 April, the stalemate on the Trail was broken, and our forces crashed forward to seize the commanding ground of SALACSAC Pass No. 2, and by 29 April all of the original enemy units had been liquidated, and the Jap forces present were, for the most part, newly organized provisional infantry units made up from Air troops, AA Bns, Motor Transportation units and a vast assortment of miscellaneous combat and converted service troops. These fresh and relatively inexperienced troops had been mixed in with the enemy's seasoned veterans to execute a "defend to the death stand" of SALACSAC Pass No. 1. On Mt. Imugan and the Yamashita Ridge, extending to the west of the Mt., the enemy had a sizeable force of over 1000 troops, consisting of the MINE Force, elements of the 6th Tank Regt, and the 2nd Armored Div AF Bn. This force limited its activities to defensive outpostting, and at no time became offensive-minded as was anticipated. The defense of SALACSAC Pass No. 1 was organized into three sectors--the Right District Unit under command of Lt Col HARADA, defending north of the Trail; the Central District Unit, under Major SAMPEI, defending the Trail itself; and the Left District Unit, which consisted of the 356th Ind Inf Bn of the 103rd Division sitting on GUERILLA Mt. In early May a wealth of documents fell into our hands, which disclosed that the TAKE Group (1st Ind Infantry Group) under the command of Maj General UEYAMA, former commander of the Manila Army Air Depot, had also come into the picture on the VILLA VERDE TRAIL, around 5 May. This group, working in close cooperation with the GEKI Group (2nd Armd Div) took over the command of the MINE Force and 200 replacements--the 17th Provisional Inf Bn--which arrived at the high ground west of IMUGAN about the 10th of May and took up positions on Hills 527, 528, and 524. The MINE Force was pulled off Mt IMUGAN and sent to reinforce scattered sectors of the Right and Central District Units. Despite these piecemeal reinforcements, the Right District Unit and the Central District Unit were both overrun on 23 May, and Salacsac Pass No. 1--the Jap's KONGO Fortress--was taken by the U.S. 32nd Division. The enemy gathered all of his remnants and stragglers together for a last-ditch stand before IMUGAN, but in spite of reinforcements and in spite of the enemy's fanatic determination, the U.S. 32nd Infantry Division stormed into IMUGAN on 28 May, to accomplish its mission. In his prolonged defense of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL the enemy had used elements of seven Infantry Divisions--the 10th, 16th, 18th, 23rd, 26th, 103rd and 105th; the main strength of his 2nd Armored Division; elements of two Air Divisions--the 2nd and the 4th; remnants of thirteen Independent Air Units; and a grand assortment of other miscellaneous combat and combat-converted service units.

2. "DO's AND DON'T's" FOR OOB TEAMS (Lessons learned from the operation)

"DO's"

1. Carefully evaluate PW information

In assessing information supplied by Jap Ps^W, a sharp watch for inconsistencies should be kept. A prisoner captured north of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL during the early phases of the operation was wearing an identification disc bearing the code name ASAHI (23rd Division). He, nevertheless, firmly maintained that he was a member of the 4th Division and said the 4th Division had also been given the code name ASAHI after reorganization in Japan. The PW further asserted that two regiments of the 4th Division-- 2000 men--were located 5000 yards north of San Nicolas. Later action absolutely refuted the prisoner's statements, and no contact was ever made with the fabled 4th Division. In the opinion of the interrogators, this prisoner was not deliberately lying, but told his story, believing it to be the truth. Since Jap soldiers are so often misinformed--deliberately or otherwise-- every precaution must be taken in evaluating information gained from this source.

2. Keep a complete, current and concise record of estimated enemy casualties and allot these to SPECIFIC sectors

This can best be accomplished by closely checking the Daily G-2 Periodic Reports to find out where, when, and how many Japs were killed. Toward the end of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL operation this practice worked to excellent advantage in estimating the strength of the Right District and Central District Units just prior to our attack on the KONGO Fortress. In this specific instance, the estimate proved to be remarkably accurate. At the same time it should be noted that accurate figures can only be obtained by this method when "estimated casualty" figures are not padded. Regimental S-2's should be constantly exhorted to get an accurate, reliable count of enemy dead.

3. Keep as large a personality file as is practically possible

Throughout the past operation the "personality file" was an invaluable aid. In the majority of cases, this file was an important feature in definitely identifying newly arrived units; in many cases it was the only way in which a force could be identified. Jap units along the VILLA VERDE TRAIL were rarely referred to by their numerical designations in documents, and prisoners more often than not only knew their units by the commanders' names. Throughout the campaign enemy unit commanders were constantly changed due to casualties, and without a complete and accurate "personality file" it would have been impossible properly to assess the greater portion of the documents captured.

4. Exercise every caution in identifying an enemy unit from a COMMON Jap name

It must be borne in mind that the Japs have many surnames as common to them as the names Smith, Brown and Jones are to Americans. During the past operation there were numerous instances in which two different commanders with the same surname were in one small area. Lt Col HARADA, CO of the 10th Tk Regt,

had under his command a 1st Lt HARADA, who was a Tk Co Commander. There were two KANEDAs, each commanding battalion-sized forces within 4000 yards of each other. Though the Japanese symbol for these two men's names was the same, it was later learned that the one called himself KANEDA, while the other preferred to be known as KANADA. For almost a week these two forces were thought to be one and the same. There is no hard and fast solution to such a problem other than remembering that such cases have occurred and keeping a cautious eye open for reoccurrences.

5. In assessing documents utilize a great deal of imagination and flexibility of thought

Jap field orders, to say the least, are confusing; they contain all sorts of scrap items mixed in with orders to attack or hold a position. The orders are likely to contain anything from an exhortation to "hurl rocks upon the enemy from great heights as our ancestors did" to the fact that "Corporal NISHIMOTO has a cold." First of all, this chaff must be discarded. Next, all terms which are synonymous for a certain unit must be grouped together. In the past operation GEKI, IWANAKA, the 12090 Force and the 520 Force all referred to the 2nd Armd Division and often appeared on one page of an order. Personal pronouns "he, you, they" were repeatedly used with abandon, and it was usually a matter of conjecture as to whom the pronouns referred. The Order of Battle Analyst must have a few delusions of grandeur and imagine himself in the Jap officer's tactical situation. The story in the documents should be considered in the widest possible latitude, and more than one interpretation should always be watched for.

"DON'T'S"

1. Do not rely on logical sequence in Japanese code number blocks

In the past action the practice of assuming certain code numbers to belong to certain unidentified units, without substantiating documentary proof, rarely worked to advantage. "Logical" procedure could not be depended upon. For instance, code numbers 15314 and 15315 were definitely known to be the 102nd and 103rd Air Training Units respectively. Code number 15313 was unidentified. Logic and reason dictated that it ought to be the 1st Air Training Unit, but, as it happened, the number was later found to belong to the 107th Air Training Unit. Thus, in dealing with code numbers, it is best to use assumptions on a strictly conservative basis.

2. Do not disregard the potential strength of Japanese "patients" when estimating enemy strength

Captured diaries, operational orders, and the repeated statements of prisoners showed conclusively that the enemy commanders on the VILLA VERDE TRAIL were utilizing hospital patients throughout the campaign. The captured orders made it apparent too, that it is a sanctioned Jap policy to use patients in carrying out suicide attacks. In the fighting on the VILLA VERDE TRAIL, several enemy strength rosters were captured which listed the total number of patients per unit as well as the combat strength. It was found to be advisable to figure these patients into our strength estimates, rather than bluntly assigning them as casualties and disregarding them.



3. Do not be too hasty to regard a unit as annihilated

During the first two months of the Villa Verde Trail operation, the U.S. 32nd Division fiercely battled against Major SUZUKI's so-called SUZUKI Detachment. During the latter days of March, SUZUKI's name and reference to his detachment stopped appearing in captured enemy field orders and documents. On 1 April it was concluded that Major SUZUKI had been killed and his force annihilated. This conclusion later proved to be erroneous, for as late as the middle of May Major SUZUKI and a small band of followers were still very much alive and fighting.

4. Do not carry an enemy unit as present in a zone of action on the basis of only a few "contact" identifications (dogtags, postcards, etc.)

The folly of this practice was clearly illustrated in the early stages of the Villa Verde operation. On 10 February a loose message sheet and several postcards identifying the 9th Mtn Arty Regt were captured along the Trail. In this instance, we attached too much significance to the scattered identifications and included the 9th Mtn Arty Regt in a weekly strength estimate. It later turned out that the unit was never present in our particular sector. In such cases where there is only flimsy evidence of a unit's presence, it is best to carry the unit in a separate column of the strength estimate as "possibly present."

115th PHOTO INTERPRETER TEAM REPORT

MAPS

1. GENERAL:

a. At the start of the campaign the only maps available were 1:250,000 and 1:50,000 maps prepared by the U.S. Corps of Engineers. These were very incomplete; many areas having very little detail and others being completely blank. Streamlines, roads and trails were often found to be inaccurate. As the campaign progressed, revised editions of the 1:50,000 maps were issued which were better than the originals but still left much to be desired. There were form lines on these maps instead of contour lines and these were often found to be inaccurate. It was very difficult to get accurate maps until near the end of the campaign.

b. Sketch maps and battle maps were prepared by the API Team, G-2 section and the S-2 sections of the regiments from data obtained from a stereoscopic study of vertical aerial photographs and from field notes.

c. Finally photomaps were made at a scale of 1:10,000 from controlled mosaics. These were overprinted with streamlines, contour lines, hill numbers and a grid corresponding to the grid of the 1:50,000 maps. These mosaics were prepared by the API Team with the aid of Division Artillery and were reproduced by the I Corps Engineers. These photomaps proved to be of greater value to the troops than any of the other maps issued.

2. TYPES OF MAPS USED:

a. 1:250,000 - Prepared by U.S. Corps of Engineers.

b. 1:50,000 - Prepared by U.S. Corps of Engineers.

c. Sketch Maps, battle maps, and operational maps 1:10,000 and 1:25,000 prepared by G-2 and S-2 sections and hectographed or lithographed by I Corps Engineers.

d. Photomaps, 1:10,000 prepared from mosaics by G-2 and S-2 sections and reproduced by I Corps Engineers.

3. DISTRIBUTION:

Approximately 200 of the 1:250,000 and 1:50,000 maps were distributed to each regiment and Division Artillery before leaving LEYTE. After reaching LUZON, additional distribution was made, as needed to all units. As fast as the sketch maps and photomaps were completed they were immediately sent to all units concerned.

4. SUMMARY:

a. Inadequate ground information made the first maps very incomplete and inaccurate.

b. As the campaign progressed and more information was obtained from photographs and field data, the maps were much better.

c. The maps found to be most useful were photomaps 1:10,000 with streamlines, contour lines, and hill numbers overprinted.

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

1. DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

a. On 1 February, 1945, a request for photographs covering the VILLA VERDE TRAIL was submitted to I Corps. Three runs of photographs were delivered on 5 February but these did not afford adequate coverage of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL. I Corps was notified immediately, and requests were sent to them on 5 and 8 February for additional coverage of the VILLA VERDE TRAIL. On 10 February a personal visit was made by the G-2 explaining in detail the urgent need for photographs. From then on Photographs were sent to the Division in large quantities covering the entire VILLA VERDE TRAIL.

b. On 4 April a request was submitted for photographs of IMUGAN. Two attempts, both failures, were made to give us complete coverage of the area. At first we received photographs south of IMUGAN and then we received a run north of IMUGAN. Finally after notifying I Corps, we received on 5 May adequate coverage of the whole area.

2. TYPES OF PHOTOGRAPHS:

a. The best vertical photographs for artillery restitution and for stereoscopic study of the terrain were taken with a K-18 camera at a scale of 1:10,000 with 60% overlap.

b. For interpreting Japanese activity, a scale of from 1:6000 to 1:2,500 with 50% overlap taken with a K-18 camera.

c. Low obliques with a 12" focal length and 1,000 feet altitude are good for interpreting.

d. High oblique photographs with 12" focal length and 800 feet altitude are ideal for studying terrain and interpreting.

e. In mountainous terrain vertical photographs taken with 6" cameras were so distorted that it was a strain on the eyes to read a stereopair.

f. Some vertical photographs received had little overlap and therefore, were not satisfactory for stereovision study or radial line restitution.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS:

a. The best photographic missions were ordered in quantities so that the regiments would receive at least four copies.

b. An accurate photographic coverage plot of the mission drawn on a map for each run of photographs was sent to the units for use in orienting their photographs.

4. USE OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

a. Aerial photographs were of great assistance in the study of terrain.

(1) Stereopairs were extensively used by the commanders in planning operations.

(2) The infantry regiments and battalions studied photographs for routes of movement.

(3) The engineers found them useful in establishing a road alignment.

b. Controlled mosaic photomaps at a scale of 1:10,000 proved to be of the utmost value.

c. Division artillery's forward observers and aerial observers used aerial photographs and photomaps to pinpoint enemy targets.

d. The artillery restituted photographs to the scale of their firing charts.

e. Aerial photographs were helpful in determining the activity of the enemy in certain areas. In rear areas they were especially helpful in locating enemy activity.

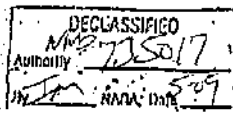
f. Oblique photographs are especially useful in locating caves and in finding activity under trees.

g. Stereopairs and oblique photographs were useful in aiding prisoners of war to locate their guns, headquarters and defense positions.

5. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Due to the lack of adequate maps of this most difficult terrain, aerial photographs played a most important part in this campaign.

b. Photomaps at a scale of 1:10,000 were preferred to 1:25,000. The more terrain information overprinted on them, the easier they are read in the field.



C E N S O R S H I P

Censorship activities throughout the "Leyte" and "Luzon" campaigns were of an advisory nature and consisted primarily in the issuance of memoranda and conferring with members of this command in the clarification of existing regulations.

A number of trips were made to see the Theater Censor to lessen the stringencies of existing regulations and some results were obtained. Throughout the period, the Office of the Theater Censor was undergoing both a shift in personnel and location and thus real liaison was hampered. It is of interest to note that members of this command were permitted to give their past locations in accordance with a directive issued by this office on 15 December 1944, as per verbal orders of the Theater Censor, while no USAFFE directive permitting past locations was issued until 12 May 1945.

Communication constituted one of the main obstacles encountered in the dissemination of information while the Division was engaged in combat. It is suggested that in the future, information of a pertinent nature be included in the miscellaneous section of G-2 Periodic Reports for the information of S-2s who can give the information to interested parties.

Through the efforts of various Base Censors at Divisions, USAFFE has finally issued the directive which has been so sorely needed regarding the mention of location by members of combat units. It is felt that with this lessening of restrictions, censorship will be less of a thorn and though its need continues, will not be so generally disliked as has been the case in the past.

It has been the opinion of this office from the outset that every effort would be made to make censorship more understandable to members of this command and remove certain restrictions whenever possible. In order to achieve this, close liaison must be maintained with the Theater Censor.

One of the least understandable features today is the Army Photo Service which is still conducted in Australia. It is hoped that in the not too distant future some arrangement will be made that will expedite the processing of film. Until such time the present regulations must remain in effect.

The main aim for the future must be the rapid and widespread dissemination of censorship information to keep all members of the command well informed of the latest regulations.