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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 3RD BN. 20TH INFANTRY (6TH INF. DIV.)  
IN A COMBAT PATROL IN NORTHERN LUZON, 5-22 JULY 1945  
(LUZON CAMPAIGN)  
(Personal Experience of a Battalion S-3)

Type of operation described: BATTALION IN A COMBAT PATROL

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- A-5 An Intelligence Summary -- Headquarters Sixth Army G-2 Section

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 3rd Bn. 20th Infantry 6th U. S. Division, in a combat patrol in northern Luzon, 5-22 July 1945.

For purpose of orientation the writer will begin with the start of the operations of the 20th Infantry 6th U. S. Division on 9 January 1945, when the unit landed as part of the 1st Corps 6th Army in the Dagupan-Mangaldan area on the island of Luzon. The mission of the 6th Division was to destroy hostile forces, seize and secure an Army beachhead in the Corps' zone of action. As far as the regiment was concerned, the landing was unopposed.

(1) (See Map 1)

The 20th Infantry advanced inland and on 16 January encountered its first action in the Cabarun Hills located a few miles north of the town of Villasis. The advance of the unit continued until they arrived at the town of Munoz. It was here that the 20th Infantry fought a successful battle against a combined force of Japanese tanks, infantry, and artillery. The unit proceeded to Bongabon with the exception of Company L which was sent to Baler Bay on the east coast of Luzon. (2)

The 20th Infantry then moved south and on 17 February passed to the control of the 14th Corps and became engaged in the Shimbu Line east of Manila. Here the 20th Infantry participated in some very tough fighting and on 18 April was relieved and passed under control of the Provost Marshal General Usaffe for garrison duty in Manila. (3)

History had repeated itself and for the 3rd time since its activation, the 20th Infantry found itself on duty in Manila. The mission in the war torn city was chiefly assisting regular M.P.'s in traffic control and in

(1, 2, 3) A-1

The enemy had no air cover, and, as a result, had been deprived of offensive capabilities, being forced into terrain that was unsuitable for maneuver but favorable for delaying action. (8)

"At 0001, 1 July 1945, as directed by Operations Instructions 106, General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area, 31 May 1945, the Commanding General, Sixth Army, passed the responsibility for all tactical and logistical missions on Luzon to the Commanding General, Eighth Army. With this assumption of responsibility, the Commanding General, Eighth Army, assumed control of XIV Corps, composed of the 6th, 32nd, 37th, and 43rd Divisions, Philippine Guerrilla Forces, North Luzon, all other guerrilla units on Luzon, Philippine Army Units attached for tactical operations and supporting combat and service units. Other major combat units on Luzon, together with supporting combat and service units, remained under control of the Commanding General, Sixth Army, to train and rehabilitate for future operations against the Japanese Empire." (9)

(See Map 2)

The 20th Infantry, commanded by Colonel Paul H. Mahoney, was given the mission of securing Highway 5 in the Division zone, to seize Jones, and to make extensive reconnaissance of the Dibuluan and Dabubu River Valleys, and to reconnoiter east from Ilagan to Palanan Bay, destroying all enemy. The 3rd Battalion was assigned the area from Ilagan to Palanan Bay. (10)

#### GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The terrain over which the operations of the 3rd Battalion, 20th Infantry took place was varied. Highway 5, the main axis of communication for the regiment, was an improved road and one of Luzon's best highways. The route leading from Naguilian to San Mariano was an unimproved road for approximately one half the distance, and was flanked by open rolling

(8) A-3, p. 3-6; (9) A-1; (10) A-4.

country. The remaining distance was little more than a wide trail surrounded by dense undergrowth.

The town of San Mariano is surrounded almost completely by a horse-shoe-like bend of the Pinacauan-de Ilagan River, which at this point is about fifty to one hundred yards wide and too deep to be forded by a man. Facing the town of San Mariano, on the east side of the river, is a cliff about one hundred feet high, going almost straight up. The trail, now only wide enough for one man to pass another, goes over this cliff. The cliff levels off to form a plateau which is covered with secondary growth, and the trail continued over this plateau to the Disabungan River which is waist deep and about fifty yards wide. The trail then reaches Abbatuan which is at the foot of two high hills reaching an elevation of four hundred feet. These hills are covered with a dense undergrowth and thick forest, so thick that one can hardly see the sky. The ground again becomes a plateau for several thousand yards until the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountains are reached. The elevation at the town of Ambabu is 1500 feet, where the Sierra Madre Range begins. These mountains parallel the east coast of northern Luzon for more than two hundred miles rising to more than 6000 feet and extending from twenty to thirty miles in width. This range bars the approach to the Cagayan Valley from the east and is rough, unmapped, unexplored country in most sections. It was over this terrain that the trail led to Palanan Bay.

(11 and 12)

THE 3RD BATTALION 20TH INFANTRY ALONG HIGHWAY 5

VICINITY OF ILAGAN 5 JULY 1945

On 5 July 1945, the 3rd Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Arthur C. Bonnycastle, relieved elements of the 37th Division along Highway 5. The mission of the Battalion was to guard the highway in its sector, paying particular attention to all bridges, to patrol vigorously and to

(11) A-1; (12) Eye witness, self.

wipe out all enemy resistance in the Battalion zone. (See Map 3) (13)

On the same day, the Battalion Commander ordered Captain Albert de Charleroy, commanding Company I, to leave a skeleton force consisting of one platoon plus a platoon of Filipino Guerrilla troops to serve as highway and bridge guards, and to move the remainder of his company as far as possible by motor down the unimproved road running east from Highway 5 vicinity of Naguilian east to San Mariano, to detruck, proceed by marching, and to capture the town of San Mariano. The road over which Company I traveled was passable by 2½ ton truck about five miles or one half the distance to the objective. Company I dismounted here and proceeded in a column of twos along the road, which was now little better than a wide trail with dense undergrowth on both sides. (14)

(See Map 3)

About 1500, while the troops were resting, the Company Commander and the Battalion S-3, together with two Filipinos advanced to the outskirts of San Mariano, where a small party of Japs was encountered. One of the Filipinos was dispatched back to the company for a platoon which came forward to the Company Commander who deployed his troops, and, after a small fire fight, moved into the town, which proved to have a population of about a hundred people who had evacuated because of Japanese occupation. The Company Commander of Company I set up his Command Post here, which was to be the base of operations from which the main action was to emanate. (15)

On 6 July, Company K, commanded by Captain Raymond Hensley was instructed to leave its present location vicinity Ilagan and to reconnoiter the east bank of the Pinacuan de Ilagan River, going from Ilagan to San Mariano and to contact Company I. The mission of Company K was to patrol aggressively and to wipe out all remaining enemy resistance in the area. K Company accomplished this mission in three days, and on 9 July, joined I Company in San Mariano. Company K had encountered only small groups of stragglers, some of whom were killed and others taken prisoner. (16)

(14, 15, 16) Eye witness, self

The main problem encountered here was one of supply and the Battalion Commander began to realize that supply would be his most difficult problem to solve in all operations in this sector. Company K was supplied first by carrier and then by water. The first day a sufficient number of civilian carriers was obtained to supply Company K. It was after this first carrying party reached Company K that an unfortunate accident occurred. The Company was in tactical bivouac, and as is usually the case, the arrival of the supply train created some little excitement. The supplies were broken down and distributed and the carriers were dispersed in the perimeter for the night. Carelessness on the part of an attached machine gunner from Company M resulted in the machine gunning of several of the carrying party. This occurred when one of the carriers, in looking at the gun, accidentally squeezed the trigger. No one was killed, but several were wounded, and attempts to secure carriers for a day or two were futile. Another means of transporting supplies was sought, and the result was the use of water transportation. The Regimental S-4 had secured a dukw and supplies were brought down the Ilagan River. This means of transportation was only fair because of the slowness of the vehicle on water and the exposure of the occupants to possible enemy fire. Several times the dukw was grounded on sand bars. Attempts were made to travel along these sand bars where they seemed firm enough, but proved unsatisfactory as the vehicle bogged down and field expedients had to be employed in extricating it. It was finally decided to travel entirely by water, which was slower but surer. (17)

Having completed their mission, Company K returned to Ilagan and took up positions guarding the highway.

During the period 6-9 July, Company I was patrolling the San Mariano area within a radius of two miles and captured small groups of prisoners.

(17) Eye-witness, self.

On one patrol, a platoon reported to have reached the town of Dibuluan. (See Map 3). Whether this report resulted from an error in map reading or whether the enemy had changed locations was never ascertained. However the report was to prove slightly embarrassing at a later date. (18)

#### PLANNING THE PATROL

On 8 July, while K Company and I Company had been on the aforementioned missions, the 3rd Battalion received an order to send a patrol consisting of a reinforced platoon to Palanan Bay on the east coast of Luzon, a distance of approximately forty five miles over unexplored enemy held territory. The mission was to reach the coast and return, destroying all enemy.

The Battalion Commander decided to take the platoon from Company L, commanded by Captain Leo Lewis. The platoon was to be reinforced by one light machine gun and one 60mm mortar and crews, and three men from the Battalion Intelligence Section, making a total of fifty men. It was decided to have two self-propelled mounts from Cannon Company started over the trail for San Mariano with the idea of getting as far east as they could, and to offer support as long as possible. The Battery Commander of C Battery 51st Field Artillery Battalion made the trip toward San Mariano but said that due to road conditions he could not get his Battery near enough to support the patrol.

The order was written and the general plan was to use I Company's Command Post at San Mariano for the Battalion forward Command Post and, as stated before, this town was to be the base of operations. One platoon of Company I was to remain at San Mariano to set up a supply base and to accompany carriers. The remainder of the company, consisting of two platoons and Company Headquarters, was to lead the patrol as far as Dibuluan (see Map 3) to establish a strong point there. Its mission

(18) Eye-witness, self.

was to secure the trail between San Mariano and Dibuluan. Company L was then to pass Company I and proceed to Ambabu and carry out a similar mission between Dibuluan and Ambabu. The platoon chosen for the mission of going to the east coast was to continue from here, accompanied by one hundred carriers if possible to get them. (19)

Supply was to be accomplished for the Battalion by carrier and it was hoped to supply the patrol by air if necessary, however no promise of an air drop could be obtained from higher headquarters. Water was to be secured from the numerous streams. Evacuation was to be by carrier. This fact did little to help the morale of the troops on the march.

Communication was to be carried on by putting an scr 694 and a scr 300 at San Mariano. The 694 was used for calling back to Battalion Headquarters on Highway 5. The 300 was to be used for contacting Company I's 300. Company L and the Patrol were also to carry scr 300's.

The Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon was to work on the trail from Highway 5 to San Mariano and attempt to make it passable for quarter ton truck traffic. This entailed constructing small bridges and corduroying the trail in many spots. No engineers were available for the 3rd Battalion at this time.

Little was known about the enemy situation except that the Japanese had been encountered in small groups on previous patrols. The trail leading to Palanan Bay, however, was suspected of being occupied in some strength by the enemy living in the mountains or attempting to reach the east coast, having been driven from Highway 5 by the Spearheading 37th Division. (20)

#### THE PATROL

Company I left San Mariano on 9 July. Filipino guides had been secured none of whom had ever made the trip over the Sierra Madre mountains, but who volunteered to lead the patrol as long as was desired.

(19, 20) Eye-witness, self.

The formation used was merely single file with scouts out about twenty five yards in front and intervals about two hundred yards between platoons. No flank security was put out because of the rough terrain off the trail. (21)

About 1500 Company I crossed the Disabungan River and reached Abbatuan, a barrio of approximately ten abandoned huts which showed signs of recent enemy occupation. The barrio was quickly searched and Company I prepared to move on. The trail led across a flat stretch of open ground for about a thousand yards and then up an abrupt densely wooded incline. The first platoon of Company I started across the open stretch and had gone about a hundred yards when enemy automatic fire forced them to hit the ground and take whatever cover they could find. (22) (See Map 4)

The fire was coming from two hills to Company I's immediate front and about at an 800 yard range. The trail led up over one of these hills. Fortunately, the enemy had opened fire too soon to cause much damage, but the 1st platoon of Company I could not advance or withdraw without suffering severe casualties. The 2nd platoon, at this stage, withdrew to high ground to the north of the trail, deployed, and proceeded to open fire in the general direction of the enemy. While this platoon fired, the first platoon infiltrated back out of the danger area. The Company Commander then withdrew his two platoons to a defiladed position and decided he would try to get some supporting fire before continuing. (23)

The Battalion forward Command Post at San Mariano was contacted and it was learned from the Battalion Commander that the two self-propelled mounts were in position about a mile west of the forward Command Post and that the cannon platoon leader was on his way forward with the Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon. The communication set up here was that the Scr 300 of cannon company was put on the same wave length as the Scr 300 at the forward Command Post which could contact the advance elements of Company I. The advance elements, however, could not

(21, 22, 23) Eye-witness, self.

contact the guns and firing orders had to be relayed. (24)

The Battalion S-3 then decided not to waste time waiting for the Cannon Platoon Leader's arrival but to fire the cannons himself. Only a general idea of the gun position was known and the exact location of the observation post was not certain. The S-3 took an scr 300 and two riflemen, went forward in dense undergrowth to a position where the enemy could be seen. The range was estimated at 10,000 yards and the azimuth at 1600 or due east, a round of smoke was called for and the round hit in the general area. Adjustments were made and effective fire was placed on the enemy emplacements as was attested to the following morning when Company I overran the enemy positions. (25)

An interesting sidelight to this action was the fact that the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon under Lt. Felix, a Filipino-American Officer, had somehow missed the trail which had branched, and they found themselves in the open area near Abbatuan when they heard the artillery fire passing over their heads and landing in the area to their front. Sensing something was amiss, they held up and were contacted by a squad of men from Company I who brought the I. and R. Platoon to Company I's area. This arrival of the I. and R. Platoon did not particularly overjoy the members of the 3rd Battalion, as it was felt that this platoon was usually sent along as a check on the tactical unit engaged. There was nothing particularly tangible to this feeling; however, it did exist. Probably this was due to reports of progress sent back to Headquarters varying somewhat according to individuals reporting. (26)

The time was now about 1630 and Company I decided to bivouac on high ground, 800 yards north of Abbatuan. At this time the first elements of Company L, which had been traveling fast, were contacted, and both companies proceeded to set up for the night. Each company picked high ground and went into a perimeter; mutually supporting fires were arranged

(24, 25, 26) Eye witness, self.

as well as could be in the situation. Local security patrols were sent out a few hundred yards before dark and mortars were fired for adjustment in several avenues of approach to the areas. Just about dark, a Filipino youth came into the perimeter with a note written in English. This note was from a Filipino collaborator stating that he wished to surrender to American troops and desired safe conduct to proper authorities for a trial. One of the Filipino guides was called and asked if he knew the writer. He said that he did and referred to the writer as "the Mayor of Gamu", a very bad man and friend of the Japanese. The guide suggested that a group of American troops go after this man. This plan was rejected however, since the move could not be accomplished before dark. A note was sent to the collaborator by the original message bearer to the effect that if he came in, he would be safe guarded and taken to authorities but that he should wait until morning. The point behind the original message was that the writer was afraid of reprisal by his countrymen and trusted only the Americans. The decision against going after the man was made because this was not the mission of the Patrol and because this might prove to be an ambush. "The Mayor of Gamu" was picked up on the return trip by a carrying party and was brought back to Battalion Headquarters where he was thoroughly cross examined by Counter Intelligence Corps men. His final disposition was a trial by civilian authorities, the result of which is not known to the writer at this time. (27)

The two companies arose about 0700 on the morning of 10 July. It was 0930 before Company I got under way. In the meantime, the Battalion Commander had talked to both the Commander of Company I and the S-3 several times concerning the delay. Evidently the Battalion Commander was under pressure from higher headquarters or was justly anxious for his units to be moving aggressively. At this point a question arose as

(27) Eye witness, self

to how enemy troops happened to be encountered here since Company I had reported having had a patrol as far as Dibuluan, and it was thought that the enemy were retreating east. The point was never pushed, however, and was soon forgotten. (28)

#### OVERRUNNING A JAPANESE STRONG POINT

The plan of attack was for Company I's two platoons to advance due east through densely wooded areas about 800 yards north of the trail and to cross the open valley where it was less than 100 yards wide. (See Map 4). It was almost necessary to cross the open area somewhere because of the nature of the terrain, which was such that it could not be advantageously by-passed. Company L took positions on high ground overlooking the valley, and when Company I had reached the edge of the clearing, the Cannon Company platoon leader put down as heavy a barrage as was possible with two 105mm Howitzers. Company I, led by their Company Commander, got across this clearing without drawing fire, and advanced slowly through the dense undergrowth on each side of the trail, which rose very abruptly to a height of 400 feet. The Japanese position was overrun and twelve enemy were killed, with no casualties sustained by Company I. It was estimated from the supplies, gun positions, and dugouts, that there had been about 100 enemy and that those left behind were a covering force for the others who had withdrawn. This proved fortunate for Company I because a force of this strength could have stopped the patrol and inflicted heavy casualties, but evidently the Cannon Company fire had discouraged an already disheartened foe. Whatever the reason for the withdrawal was, Company I did not quibble, but accepted it as a fortune of war. (29) (See Map 4)

The advance now was cautious, and Company I now moved slowly over the rough trail along which was found, in addition to Japanese equipment, surrender leaflets which had been dropped by American planes. These leaflets at this time, did not seem remunerative, but did help the morale of the American troops.

(28, 29) Eye witness, self.

That our program caused concern to the enemy command is shown by the following extract from a document which was captured earlier in the Luzon campaign.

"The enemy has recently been widely scattering propaganda leaflets stating that the Luzon operation has been favorable to him and that anti-war feeling is rising among our troops. Therefore, each unit will have its officers and men recognize that in actuality the Luzon operation has been favorable to us and at the same time will make particular effort to raise morale of troops. Furthermore, when leaflets are found, they will be handled over to superiors at once, and it is prohibited for officers and men in general to keep them." (30)

At 1730 on 10 July, Company I reached its destination at Dibuluan, which had been burned down and showed no signs of inhabitants. Company L closed in to the area at 1800 and both companies dug in for the night. The country in this area was not wooded nor was there much vegetation to speak of, and it was possible to see quite a distance. This fact helped all feel a bit more secure. Lookouts were posted with glasses and one of them located a group of ten enemy about a mile away. The Commanding Officer of Company I quickly assembled a squad and a light machine gun and led them several hundred yards toward the enemy, who had not seen our troops. This squad went into position, opened fire, and killed several of the enemy before they realized what was happening. The morale in Company I was now high, for they had reached their destination and had secured themselves on advantageous terrain. (31) (See Map 3)

The following morning, 11 July, after a short discussion, it was decided to patrol to the flanks of the trail instead of continuing on immediately. The reason was to make sure that no large bodies of enemy troops would be encountered before Company L continued on and our forces were split. The result of the day's patrolling was no enemy encountered,

(30) A-5, p. 139; (31) Eye witness, self.

but to everyone's surprise, an Alamo Scout Team was found in the area. Notes were compared but the only information of value was that another scout team had landed by boat some months ago at Palanan Bay but what the team had learned, the leader of the present team did not know. (32)

The lieutenant in command of the team was heading for Highway 5 after having been out for over a week and was in need of supplies. Although the scout team played no part in this action to speak of, the writer feels that a description of a typical group of this nature could be given here.

The Alamo Scout Team was a valuable military organization designed to give the 6th Army Headquarters an organic reconnaissance agency, and it functioned under the Army G-2. A team was composed of six men, one of whom was an officer, usually of junior grade. The men had been selected from units of the Sixth Army and were given a six week training course, in which map reading, use of radios, sketching, combat intelligence, message writing, scouting, patrolling, and marksmanship in all weapons the scout would use were stressed. In addition, these men were given strenuous physical conditioning. Those not meeting qualifications were returned to their units. The mission of the teams was to collect information behind enemy lines and to organize guerrilla activities. (33)

#### THE FINAL PHASE OF THE PATROL

The patrol continued on the next day with a squad of Company I acting as a point for Company L. This squad was to accompany Company L for two hours and return to Company I's command post now at Dibuluan. The journey was uneventful until the lead squad started across a stream about twenty five yards wide. The first scout was half way across when he was wounded by enemy rifle fire. The squad quickly came up on line, took up positions, and opened fire while the second scout went forward and pulled his lead scout to safety. The Commanding Officer of Company L quickly dispatched two squads to go up and down the stream and pull a double envelopment while he brought up a platoon to assist Company I's squad on the line it had

(32) Eye witness, self; (33) A-5, p. 101-119

established. The maneuver was quickly accomplished, and extreme care was exercised so that the troops did not fire into each other. The move had completely surprised the enemy and, as a result, several Japanese were killed and four captured. (34)

Company I's squad, assisted by Filipino carriers, started back with the wounded men, a move which took two days to complete. Company L continued on and on 13 July, arrived at their destination in Ambabu, a small uninhabited barrio in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountains. It was from here that the platoon was to continue on to Palanan Bay, which was still about twenty miles away and over the mountains. Orders were received at this time to the effect that the 3rd Battalion was to hold its present locations, which it did. For several days the companies patrolled their zones with no enemy contact. Patrols from Company L went several thousand yards east of Ambabu. (35)

#### THE RELIEF

On 18 July, the Battalion received orders that it was being relieved in its sector by elements of the 32nd Division. Companies I and L were to return to Highway 5. The Battalion was to move by motor to the Ifugao Country along Highway 4, where it remained until the cessation of hostilities with Japan, and participated in peace negotiations with General Yamashita's forces. For its operations during the period 5-22 July, the Battalion received a written commendation from the Commanding General, C. E. Hurdis. (36)

#### ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The operation of the units involved in this action, while not spectacular as far as the number of enemy troops killed or captured is concerned, did show close cooperation of a unit and the ability to function efficiently as a military organization. The tactical significance of the mission at the time was questioned by members of the Battalion, however the results of the patrol did reveal to higher headquarters what the situation was in the area as far as the big picture was concerned.

(34, 35, 36) Eye witness, self

During the action the enemy merely left the trail to the 3rd Battalion, especially as long as it was in strength, however, once the platoon had left Ambabu, it would have been easy prey for the enemy. The Japanese could have cut the supply line in hundreds of places, even between strong points held by the companies.

Evacuation would have been well nigh impossible once the platoon had traveled any distance into the Sierra Madre Mountains. The one man that was wounded near Dibuluan was hauled by litter for two days. Troops, especially seasoned ones as comprised the units of the Battalion, are quick to notice these facts and the morale of even good units is destroyed.

The false report given by Company I could have caused serious trouble. In this case, however, it was never questioned by higher headquarters.

Regiment had not informed Battalion of the attachment of the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon, and no plans had been made to supply them. Closer coordination between units in this case would have been better. The attaching of twenty five men means twenty five more rations to be fed when supply was already a tough problem. There was no need of the I. and R. Platoon and sending them along was a duplication of effort. Company I could have been badly shot up, had the enemy exercised better fire discipline near Abbatuan. Company I showed the value of previous combat experience when it soon worked out a solution and extricated itself from a rough situation by employing fire and movement even though the movement was backward.

Much work was done by the Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon in getting the trail from Highway 51 to San Mariano open for 1/4 ton truck traffic and in helping to get the Cannon Company mounts over the trail so that they could get close enough to support the patrol.

The support given by the Cannon Platoon was valuable, as was proven in the action near Abbutuan. Every effort should be made to furnish all missions with supporting fires, as this is not only a material aid, but serves as a morale builder to the troops.

The assistance given by Filipino carriers cannot be praised enough. These people, sturdy and brave, gave real help to the American soldiers, and

a mutual respect was maintained. Moreover, the accomplishment of the mission would have been impossible if these people had not offered their assistance.

The officers on this patrol were not swayed from their mission when an opportunity presented itself to capture the collaborator. This showed in a small way that they remembered their mission and stuck to it.

The troops in this action, while not as cautious as they might have been, especially as far as security measure were concerned, went about performing their mission in a military manner displaying a calmness and coolness that comes only with experience gained from combat.

#### LESSONS

Some of the lessons learned from this operation are:

1. Supply and evacuation of wounded play an important part in any type of military operation.
2. Cooperation of civilians can influence the accomplishment of a mission.
3. All operations should have artillery support if possible.
4. Psychological warfare has a definite place in combat, and its importance should not be belittled.
5. Units should be sure reports are true before they are submitted.
6. Members of lower unit staffs should not question missions assigned.
7. Good communications are essential to the success of military operations and ingenuity may be used occasionally in place of standing operating procedures.

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