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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 24TH INFANTRY DIVISION IN THE INVASION
OF MINDANAO, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 17 April - 11 August 1945,
WITH EMPHASIS ON G-1 ACTIVITIES
(SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Division General Staff Officer, As
Assistant Division G-1 and Subsequently Division G-1)

Type of operation described: AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION OF AN
INFANTRY DIVISION WITH EMPHASIS ON G-1 ACTIVITIES

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INTRODUCTION

This personal experience monograph covers the operations of the 24th Infantry Division in the Invasion of Mindanao Island, Philippine Islands, during the period of 17 April to 11 August 1945 with particular emphasis being placed on the G-1 activities of the Division General Staff. The division operation, commencing with an amphibious assault developed initially into a highly mobile situation with later phases being involved with a hard slow-moving battle. A study of this operation is believed to be of special interest to military students as it affords an opportunity to study an independent infantry division action which was an infrequent situation in World War II.

To present the personnel staff functioning of this operation the author has organized his monograph to give first, the general situation, then the high level planning and consideration of the target area. This is followed by the division situation immediately prior to the operation and the G-1 situation at that time. A description of the division and G-1 planning phases for the operation is then included. This is believed essential to convey to the reader the lengthy and detailed prior planning necessary for an amphibious operation as well as establishing the G-1 situation at that time as it affected the operation.

Only a brief narrative of the tactical operation is included followed by a detailed narrative of the G-1 activities for the same period of time. The latter activities are consolidated into two major phases, first, the fast overland march across Mindanao from Parang to Davao, and second, the stabilized situation in the Davao Gulf area where normal staff operations were conducted. For a complete consideration of the

normal G-1 staff functioning a paragraph is included in this section for each of the eleven major subjects included in the G-1 S-1 instruction course for resident students of the Advanced Infantry Course for 1948-49, Fort Benning, Georgia.

Although there are many outstanding tactical lessons to be found in this operation, for brevity and clarity the analysis and criticisms and lessons learned are confined only to the G-1 activities of the operation.

THE GENERAL SITUATION

General MacArthur's strategic plans for the liberation of the Central and Southern Philippines were based on the assumption of conducting a series of amphibious operations in that area concurrently with the long Luzon campaign. This would effect the complete liberation of the entire Philippines and release the bulk of the combat troops for joint operations against Japan by the time difficult Luzon was secured. The Central and Southern Philippine plan envisioned first, American bases on Palawan Island and on the Zamboanga Peninsula - Sulu Archipelago to control the sea routes to the West and South of the Philippines as well as isolating the Jap garrisons in Mindanao proper and the Celebes. Then, ports were to be secured on Pangs, Cebu, and Negros Islands. From the latter points, allied forces could reach out over the entire Visayan area enhancing the success of the subsequent plan for Mindanao's liberation. All of these varied operations became the mission of the Commanding General, Eighth Army while Sixth Army continued to reduce the Japanese bastion of Luzon. (1)

Based on detailed directives from General Headquarters, the Eighth Army planned, staged and executed a series of five successive amphibious operations to complete the Southern Philippines campaign. The code names of Victor I, II, III, IV and V respectively were assigned to these actions. The five target areas in chronological order of execution were as follows:

(2)

(1) A-8, p. 23; (2) A-8, pp. 56-64.

<u>Operation:</u>	<u>Target Area:</u>	<u>Assault Date:</u>
Victor III	Palawan Island Group	28 Feb 1945
Victor IV	Zamboanga-Sulu Archipelago	10 Mar 1945
Victor I	Panay Isl. - SW, NE Negros Isl.	18 Mar 1945
Victor II	Cebu Isl. - S, SE Negros Isl.	26 Mar 1945
Victor V	Mindanao Island	17 Apr 1945

Victor V was considered the most important of all five of the Victor operations under Eighth Army control in the Southern Philippines Campaign. A map study will indicate that Mindanao proper had been isolated from the rest of the Philippines by the previous four Victor actions. (3) Victor IV; the acquisition of the Zamboanga Peninsula-Sulu Archipelago, was considered a vital prerequisite to the success of the operations on Mindanao as the area afforded critically needed air, water and ground bases for support of the amphibious assault of the island in addition to the importance of clearing and denying further use of the North-South and East-West sealanes in that area by the Jap. Although action was still in progress on the Zamboanga Peninsula in early April as well as the other areas of Victor I, II and III, it was indicated by the high command that Victor V would proceed concurrently as scheduled. In the 44 days immediately preceding Victor V, the Eighth Army had made 14 major amphibious landings and 24 minor ones, averaging almost one per day. This schedule strained severely the U. S. Navy's ability to provide landing craft in desired quantities in addition to posing a logistical support problem of no small scale. (4)

The situation in the entire Philippines immediately prior to 17 April 1945, the assault date ("R" Day) selected for Victor V is given in the orientation map herewith. (Map A) It is noted the only remaining effective centers of Japanese resistance were the Northeastern portion of Luzon, (3) A-8, p. 64; (4) A-8, p. 27.

where the Sixth Army was heavily engaged with a bitter and fanatical enemy, and the vast area of Mindanao Island proper. At this time all echelons of command were impressed time and time again with the necessity of bringing the entire liberation of the Philippine Islands to a speedy and victorious conclusion. (5)

A brief terrain study of Mindanao reveals a rugged tropical island approximately 200 miles East-West and 300 miles North-South, exclusive of the Zamboanga Peninsula. (6) The projection of the Peninsula which is joined to the main island by a 7 mile wide isthmus to the West only adds an additional 100 miles to the overall width while not affecting the North-South distance. Mindanao is the second largest island of the Philippines, second only to Luzon to the North. In general, the Island contains all types of terrain but in the main consists of several North-South mountain chains of volcanic origin. These ranges contain some of the highest peaks in the Philippines. Mt. Apo, of the Apo Range in the southeastern portion of the island rises to a height of 9,682 ft. (7) The ruggedness of the terrain is attested to by the fact that, even today, much of the inland portions of the island remains unexplored and unmapped. The high mountainous ground drops off rapidly to the low marsh and swampy deltas in the valleys where drainage is sluggish and poor. (8) The lowlands therefore, due to the swampy condition, lend themselves to a thick jungle vegetation which is almost impenetrable at any point off of a road. While there are many streams, few are navigable. An exception to this rule is the Mindanao River which flows into the Moro Gulf at Cotabato. The river is navigable for shallow draft boats for an inland distance of approximately 60 miles practically East-West from the west coast. The island possesses no railroads and only an extremely poor road net for tactical purposes. Only one North-South road and one East-West road provide a meager source of movement (5) Personal knowledge; (6) A-2, p. 2; (7) A-6, p. 6; (8) Personal knowledge.

across the entire island. (9) (See Map B) These roads lacked maintenance of any kind since the beginning of the Jap invasion in 1942. At best they were narrow one-way unimproved roads with a narrow cobblestone center for carabao and carts. In some instances the roads were covered entirely by jungle growth including tall cogon grass and young trees well over the height of a man. (10) Hundreds of wooden bridges over narrow defiles and deep mountain gullies had been burned or destroyed either by guerrilla action to hinder Jap movement during their occupation or by the Jap to impede the American liberation which had been expected momentarily from time to time since mid-1944. Due to the road net and rough terrain, maneuver was extremely difficult and the country was entirely unsatisfactory for employment of mechanized forces or tracked vehicles of any type. (11) Mindanao's irregular coastline offered innumerable beaches suitable for an amphibious assault. However, most of the adequate beaches unfortunately were backed up by extremely unfavorable rugged terrain lacking entirely any avenues of advance or road nets. The assault beaches with the necessary prerequisites of routes were limited to one each on the North, South, East and West. (12)

As Mindanao is in close proximity to the equator, a hot humid malarial climate is experienced the year round with average temperatures in the mid-eighty degrees with little variation. The monsoons prevail from November to April and June to September and rains can be anticipated at any time true to tropical tradition. Due to a generous rainfall, outside of lumbering and limited mining operations an agricultural economy prevailed with the main pre-war exports being generally copra, hemp and some rice. This area furnished 60 per cent of the sturdy well-known Manila hemp produced in the Philippines. (13)

Data gathered over a long period of time from guerrilla sources as

(9) Personal knowledge; (10) A-2, p. 2; (11) Personal knowledge;
(12) A-2, p. 4; (13) A-6, pp. 6-12.

well as more recent intelligence information gleaned from the previous Victor operations indicated that Jap troops in Mindanao could be estimated at approximately 30,000. This estimate was later proven to be erroneous and conservative. A detailed accounting on V-J Day at the conclusion of the operations reasonably substantiated the enemy to be at least in a strength of 50,000 at the time of the American invasion on 17 April 1945.

(14) The Jap garrison consisted primarily of elements of the XXXV Army (Corps), the 100th and 30th Divisions plus elements of airfield construction battalions and curiously enough, large numbers of the Imperial Japanese Navy employed as ground troops under the command of a Japanese Admiral. (15) The main concentration of Japanese military and civilian population was in and around the town of Davao on the Davao Gulf. This is explained by a large migration of Japanese to that area as colonists during a period of approximately 30 years. (16) They had become firmly entrenched in the economic and agricultural life of the area and were the controlling faction on the Gulf years prior to the formal declaration of war. Due primarily to this settlement the Davao Gulf was known to have been heavily fortified against any anticipated American assault since the early days of the war. In addition to Davao, other large concentrations of Jap troops were suspected on the north coast of Mindanao in the vicinity of Bugo and also in the Sarangani Bay area. (See Map O) Strengths in all other areas were limited. The Jap garrison, while of considerable size, was hampered in maneuver by the lack of transportation and by the poor road nets and terrain previously mentioned. Our intelligence initially surmised that the Jap could be defeated in and around the areas he initially occupied at the time of our invasion as mentioned above. (17) This was later substantiated in the conduct of our operations. It was believed that the Japanese forces were adequately supplied and that their

(14) A-6, p. 16; (15) A-2, p. 4; (16) A-2, p. 1; (17) A-6, p. 15.

combat efficiency and training equalled or was superior to that of enemy forces encountered in the previous four Victor operations. (18)

PLAN OF HIGHER HEADQUARTERS.

In February, 1945, General Headquarters estimated that two divisions would be required for the Mindanao Operation. It was believed that this force should seize the Malabang-Cotabato area on the west coast of Mindanao to permit the establishment of an advance base to support the future operation. (19) This tentative plan was confirmed in their General Headquarters Operations Instructions No. 97 on 11 March 1945 to the Commanding General, Eighth Army directing that "the Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area be seized by an overwater operation, and from there to continue the offensive and destroy hostile forces on the Island East of the Zamboanga Peninsula". (20)

Issuing Field Order 26 on 20 March 1945 Eighth Army designated the X Corps reinforced and the 24th and 31st Infantry Divisions as the Victor V force with the 41st Infantry Division and the 503d Parachute Regimental Combat Team in Army reserve. The assault was to be made by the 24th Division on "R" Day (17 April 1945) in the vicinity of Malabang. The 31st Division was to arrive in the objective area on "R" plus five days. (21) This order was later amended on 8 April 1945 to provide that "the 31st Division after landing in the Malabang-Cotabato area, would be retained there until released by the Commanding General, Eighth Army and would not be committed except upon his directive". (22)

Combat units with a total strength of 42,754 men were allocated for this operation with the support of 10,838 service troops. This made a grand total in excess of 53,000 troops and was the largest operation undertaken by Eighth Army to that date. (23)

(18) Personal knowledge and A-2, p. 16; (19) A-6, p. 18; (20) A-6, p. 18; (21) A-6, p. 18; (22) A-6, p. 18; (23) A-6, p. 19.

By landing this force in the area selected it was expected that no sizeable enemy force would be encountered. The initial objective was to seize the Malabang airfield and to establish the beachhead for an advanced base to support the remainder of the operation.

THE DIVISION SITUATION

The 24th Infantry Division was activated prior to World War II on 1 October 1941 from elements of the U. S. Hawaiian Division at Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii. After training periods in Hawaii and Australia, the division experienced its first combat action in the New Guinea area on 30 January 1944. (24) For the purpose of this monograph it is believed that the division can be considered as a satisfactorily trained and combat tested organization with an excellent record of demonstrated combat efficiency. The status of supply was satisfactory, reflecting the average combat supply deficiencies to be found in any similar organization in the Southwest Pacific area at that time.

The 24th Infantry Division was composed of the following organic units during combat operations of World War II: (25)

- Hq & Hq Co, 24 Inf Div
- 19 Inf Regt
- 21 Inf Regt
- 34 Inf Regt
- Hq & Hq Btry, 24 Inf Div Arty
- 11 FA Bn (155 How)
- 13 FA Bn (105 How)
- 52 FA Bn (105 How)
- 63 FA Bn (105 How)
- 24 Med Bn
- 3 Engr Combat Bn
- Hq Sp Trps, 24 Inf Div
- 24 Ord Co
- 24 QM Co
- 24 Sig Co
- 24 MP Plat
- 24 Inf Div Band

The Division was alerted for the Invasion of Mindanao (Victor V) by Warning Order No. 5 of Hq. Eighth Army dated 5 March 1945. "R" Day was (24) A-10, p. 4; (25) Personal knowledge.

designated as 17 April 1945. At the time of receipt of the Warning Order the division command post was situated on the Island of Mindoro where it had moved following relief on Leyte in early February, 1945. Approximately 65 per cent of the combat elements of the division had been detached since late December, 1944 and were engaged as operational attachments to major units fighting on Luzon. This was believed necessary due to overall limited troop strengths available in the theater at that time. One infantry regiment (-) and two Field Artillery Battalions remained under division control on Mindoro. (26) These units were engaged in small unit amphibious combat missions on Mindoro and adjacent islands. The division service elements and division staff were engaged with the dual mission of refitting available division units as well as functioning as a provisional island command for Mindoro to include operation of port facilities, supply dumps, supply points, heavy construction of fixed installations as well as establishment and operation of a staging area for other major ground units. Also additional logistical functions were performed to support major combat units currently fighting on Luzon. The island command task was a large and exacting mission inasmuch as it required the substantial development and operation of a sizeable base in a minimum time on an island just recently wrested from the Jap. (27)

The detached combat elements did not return to division control on Mindoro until approximately three weeks prior to the embarkation date selected for Victor V. These three weeks offered no time for urgent combined training of any kind. By necessity the main effort was made on rehabilitation and refitting in view of a prolonged operation ahead. Unit training on the company and battalion level was conducted to orient replacements that had joined at this time. (28) Some combat units had been continuously in action for six months in the various Philippine operations with little opportunity for suitable rest periods.

(26) Personal knowledge; (27) Personal knowledge; (28) Statement of Brigadier General Hugh Cort, then Colonel, Division Chief of Staff, Nov. 1948.

During the planning phase of the operation the division staff worked on the maze of operational and logistical details necessary for the coordination and success of an amphibious division assault in addition to the extra mission of conducting the Mindoro base development and functioning. Relief finally was obtained from the base operations mission on or about 5 April 1945 when a small detachment of Hq. Eighth Army Area Command arrived on the Island and started to assume responsibility for the continuing base functioning. (29)

THE DIVISION PLAN

As discussed previously, the General Headquarters tactical directive as implemented by Eighth Army gave the division no alternative but to formulate attack plans utilizing only one landing beach at Malabang, enlarging it into a suitable beachhead to support logistically the island operation to follow. Accordingly, the plan devised by the division for the Malabang landing provided for RCT 19 to land on the south flank of the division beach, block off Malabang Town and a secondary airfield on the north flank, then with a highly mobile battalion, lightly equipped with a sole mission of making time, break away to the south to seize Parang. RCT 21 was to land abreast of RCT 19 on the north flank of the division beach, seize the Malabang airfield, gain contact with any guerrillas to the north and establish a beach suitable for landing of LSTs. RCT 34, in division reserve, to be held afloat at Zamboanga, was to land at Parang at "R plus 2" days in the beachhead which was to be established by that time by elements of RCT 19. From past experience all echelons of command had learned to keep plans simple and therefore flexible at all times when coordinated amphibious operations were involved. (30) (See Map C)

Staff planning for the amphibious phase of the operation was made more (29) Personal knowledge; (30) A-2, p. 2.

difficult by a drastic decrease in the amount of amphibious shipping normally allocated for a similar overwater tactical lift of the division. This was undoubtedly due to heavy demands for amphibious vessels throughout the Philippines to support the numerous concurrent operations then in progress. As a partial solution to this problem, Eighth Army directed a 25 per cent cut in motor vehicles normally taken on a tactical operation by all participating organizations. (31) This was a severe jolt inasmuch as infantry divisions in the Pacific operated under special theater equipment allocations which authorized far less motor vehicles than the standard Tables of Equipment then in use by the War Department. Even final shipping allocations did not become firm until the actual embarkation date due to constant withdrawal and substitution of shipping by higher headquarters or unavailability of vessels due to damage and repairs. The final division amphibious lift was accomplished with the following shipping: (32)

- 1 Amphibious Flagship (Navy, Corps, Div Cmdra' party)
- 1 Cutter, Coast Guard type
- 26 LSTs
- 10 LSMs
- 13 LOIs
- 6 LCTs

This shipping lifted the three RCTs and portions of the division service units for the "R" and "R plus 2" Days landings. The shipping lists required close editing due to lack of passenger space. Some service elements normally included in the close support were, by necessity, placed in the rear echelon shipping. After completing discharge of the assault personnel and cargo at the objective area, the amphibious shipping planned to shuttle to Mindoro to lift unit rear echelons and the balance of the division supplies. The return schedule provided for the rear echelons and supplies to arrive at the objective area by "R plus 10" Days. (33) One Liberty-type ship joined the return convoy at Mindoro, assisting in moving (31) A-6, p. 135; (32) A-15, Annex "H"; (33) A-15, Annex "H".

part of the 30 day supply level of Class I, II, III and IV (less Engineer) and three Units of Fire. (34) This supply level was prescribed by Eighth Army and was normal for an amphibious operation of this size. Obviously the bulk and tonnages represented in this level could not be lifted with the assault elements. Sufficient supplies accompanied the assault force to sustain operations until such time as the rear echelons and supplies would arrive.

With this tactical and amphibious movement plan completed, the assault echelons commenced loading operations on 10 April 1945 on excellent loading beaches in the Mindoro harbor. By darkness of 12 April all vessels had completed loading personnel and equipment and had retracted from the beach to await sailing orders. (35)

On the morning of 13 April, a few hours before the scheduled departure of the convoy, a radio message from Eighth Army was received aboard the flagship to the effect that the Filipino guerrillas had forced the Jap evacuation of Malabang and therefore the division was ordered to change its assault beach from Malabang to Parang, 10 miles to the south. In the matter of minutes available before sailing under radio silence the division commander revised his tactical plan to provide for RCT 19 to make the initial division assault landing at Parang with the mission of moving out immediately on the road to the southeast; RCT 21 (minus one battalion making a Malabang landing as originally planned to insure the retention of the Malabang airfield) was to follow over the same beach, reorganize and prepare to move out on order; RCT 34, in division reserve was to land as originally planned on "R plus 2" Days. This changed landing plan was verbally distributed to all assault elements prior to sailing and later confirmed by a field order. By 1300 hours, 13 April (a Friday, the thirteenth), the convoy sailed to the south for the assault of Mindanao. (36)

(34) A-6, p. 135; (35) Personal knowledge; (36) Personal knowledge.

THE G-1 SITUATION

The division G-1 staff section consisted of the following personnel during World War II:

1 Lieutenant Colonel, GSO	Div G-1
1 Major, GSO	Asst Div G-1
1 Master Sergeant	Chief Clerk
1 Tech 4	Clerk-Typist

For office space, this staff section operated normally in one standard pyramidal tent for both combat and rest area phases. The tentage served adequately for "blackout" purposes for night operations when required by the situation.

During the pre-planning phase for Victor V, the G-1 section was located in the division command post on Mindoro. The section handled a normal volume of personnel business consistent with the existing tactical situation. Although 65 per cent of the command had been detached operationally for combat, the administrative responsibility for these units still remained with the Commanding General, 24th Infantry Division. Unit personnel sections remained on Mindoro with small rear echelon detachments when their parent units were released for these detached operations. Therefore a normal flow of administrative matters was maintained with only slight delays due to transmission of correspondence and reports by air courier mail from the detached parent units.

G-1 was involved in the Mindoro base operations to a limited degree only. Additional functions included the furnishing of considerable personnel by MOS for the non-table of organization positions required in the provisional base operations to supplement the division service elements already committed to this project. Securing of native labor from the hill country of the island for port stevedore duty also was made a G-1 function. Assistance was given to several Filipino recruiting teams operating in the vicinity with GHQ approval in attempts to secure enlistments of Filipino

guerrillas and civilians for the Philippine Army. (37)

Replacements were received in limited quantities during this period and were assigned equitably by MOS and branch of service to units most critically in need of replenishment of strength. To fully understand the personnel and replacement situation within the division it is necessary to discuss briefly the directives of higher headquarters at the time of the operational detachment of troops referred to above. When RCT 19 (-) and RCT 34 were detached for the Luzon operations it was ordered by higher headquarters that both organizations be brought up to Table of Organization strengths. At that time the division was understrength with no immediate prospects of replacements. To comply with this directive it was necessary for experienced infantrymen to be transferred from the remaining 21st Infantry Regiment in sufficient numbers to bring the 19th and 34th RCT's up to T/O strength. When replacements were finally received some time later the bulk of the replacements necessarily went to the 21st Infantry Regiment to balance their excessive understrength. This posed a sizeable training problem and affected the combat efficiency of that unit adversely as green recruits were substituted for the transferred combat infantrymen. When the detached units returned from Luzon it was decided that any advantages of retransferring of personnel back to the 21st Infantry Regiment would be outweighed by the disadvantages inasmuch as approximately three months had elapsed since the original shifting of personnel had taken place. (38) This situation was to be reflected later in the Mindanao operation when the going was the toughest. Even though some replacements were received prior to the Mindanao operation the division embarked understrength. The Artillery units, due to low casualty rates were approximately at T/O strengths. However, each infantry battalion was understrength about 100 infantrymen. (39) The understrength

(37) Personal knowledge; (38) Personal statement of Major General R. B. Woodruff, then division commander, December 1948; (39) Statement of Lieutenant Colonel Walter Wickbelt, Executive Officer, 19th Inf. Regt., Jan. 1949.

was about equal in all three infantry regiments. A small understrength in the division service elements was not expected to affect the accomplishment of their mission as few casualties were expected in their ranks based on past experience.

During the pre-planning phase the G-1 expressed interest in the vital morale sustaining activities and factors contributing to morale during the rest period. A brief summary of these items is believed timely at this point.

Morale activities of the division were coordinated with the Division Special service Officer. An adequate supply of 16 mm. entertainment films were provided during this period but maintenance and replacement of projection equipment was unsatisfactory due to lack of adequate supply and repair facilities. Several USO entertainment units were booked for appearances when the bulk of the combat troops had returned from their Luzon missions. Athletic equipment was limited and in poor condition with replacement difficult to secure due to limited supply.

As a morale sustaining activity, post exchange supplies were available in limited quantities during this rest period. Items were principally sweets and edibles that could stand up in the tropical temperatures. These were regarded as delicacies as none had been available for some time. Limited supplies of current magazines were also available for sale as well as a few wrist watches, pens and pencils. Of considerable morale significance was a monthly beer issue of four cans per man. In view of the complete lack of any indigenous beverages in the Islands the importance of an adequate regular beer issue cannot be underestimated in a hot tropical climate. Army policy had established a monthly beer ration of one case per man per month. Unfortunately, this amount was never received by the combat troops and the ration seldom exceeded six cans per man per month. (40)

(40) Personal knowledge.

Brief comment on the effect of the quartermaster ration upon morale is believed pertinent at this time also. During the staging period in this area the ration consisted of dehydrated and tinned components entirely with bread being the only reasonably fresh item available. This situation created a vicious monotonous diet resulting in a general loss of weight throughout the command. This occurred at a time when fresh components, particularly meat, were sorely needed as it followed a period of sustained combat. (41)

Mail was received regularly by air from the Army Postal Regulating Station situated on Leyte. Airmail from the Zone of Interior in almost every instance arrived faster than the processed V-Mail. Parcel post continued to be slow and uncertain. Due to the deep personal interest of the division commander in the prompt receipt and distribution of mail within the command, the G-1 made a daily report to the Commanding General personally of the quantities of mail received by the Division APO for each 24-hour period and the time required to distribute the shipment to the subordinate postal sections. Prompt mail service was believed to be one of the greatest contributing factors to the excellent morale within the command at this time. (42)

A small provisional casual camp was operated at all times under the supervision of the G-1. This organization assisted by billeting of casualties returning from hospitals, sorting and delivery of personnel to the rear echelons of division units. Normally, replacements were received in such large numbers that the casual camp was unable to accommodate them. In such cases, assignment to units without delay was imperative.

No rest camps of any type were available at this time or any other time to division personnel.

During the rest period all organizations were urged by the G-1 to (41), (42) Personal knowledge.

hold unit ceremonies for the presentation of awards and decorations. This was deemed essential as some units had not made formal presentation of awards for the Leyte campaign which had taken place some six months prior to this period. (43)

THE G-1 PLAN

During the staff planning phase of the Victor V operation, the G-1 section prepared a personnel annex to the division administrative order. Due to the peculiarities of an amphibious operation on a division level, the administrative order by necessity was habitually a bulky document. In addition to the normal G-1 items in the personnel annex it was necessary to include instructions on finance matters, civil affairs, the operation of division and unit APOs, and the disposition and treatment of recovered allied prisoners of war. Based on directives of higher headquarters the allied Prisoner of War recovery plan required two pages of detailed instructions. (44)

Dissemination of information of a G-1 nature prior to the operation was accomplished by distribution of the administrative order, conferences and personal staff visits to subordinate units. As soon as each major detached unit returned to Mindoro for staging the S-1s of the units were briefed by the G-1 in a personal conference on the various personnel aspects of the approaching operation. Due to the fact that all S-1s had been functioning in their positions for considerable time the briefing was relatively simple and expeditious. Profiting by the experience of previous combat much of the detailed personnel functioning had been condensed to SOP procedures. No major problems were anticipated in the G-1 activities on this particular operation. (45)

It was mandatory that plans for the amphibious movement of the (43), (44) Personal knowledge; (45) A-15 Annex "I".

division headquarters be carefully formulated by G-1 with the Headquarters Commandant. Due to lack of shipping many of the staff sections were deprived of vehicle assignments normally at their disposal. Staff section requests for passenger space on the various echelons were considered and then edited to fit the shipping allocations. G-4 coordinated the requests of the technical staff and services who desired to accompany the assault command group and the "R plus 2" days echelons. In many instances the editing was a ruthless procedure with organization of the various staff sections being necessarily sacrificed to conform to available ship space. The Chief of Staff was called upon to make final decisions in all cases where agreements could not be reached with staff heads concerned. This situation was further complicated by the last-minute unannounced arrival of personnel and equipment from higher headquarters to join the assault elements of the command post. These included one 2½T radio van from Corps headquarters with personnel, a combat photographer team from GHQ with transportation and a large Support Air Party with personnel and considerable transportation. To include these units, loading tables were readjusted again by dropping the least essential division staff sections to a lower priority echelon of shipping.

Headquarters personnel were split with portions of staff sections on several ships to minimize losses and insure continuity of operations should any one of the vessels be knocked out by enemy action. The "R" Day and "R plus 2" Day command post occupied space on the following vessels with other elements of the division:

- 1 Amphibious Flagship (Div OG & party)
- 1 Cutter, Coast Guard type (ADC & party)
- 2 LSTs
- 2 LCIs
- 1 LSM
- 1 LCT

Distribution of headquarters personnel into the two assault echelons was as follows:

"R Day" Echelon

CG & Aides
ADC and Aides
Chief of Staff
G-1 (including one AG Officer, two clerks, one half QM Graves
Registration Section)
G-2 (including minimum personnel of Order Battle, CIC, Photo
Interpretation and Language Detachment (ATIS) Teams)
G-3
G-4
CWS Officer (miras section)
Chaplain (miras half of section)
PRO
Hq. Comdt.
Regtl Ln Off - 21 RCT
Combat Photo Team
Attached Support Air Party
Hq. Co. (-)

"R plus 2" Day Echelon

Division Surgeon Section
Med Det, Hq Sp Trps
Chaplain (half of section)
Red Cross Field Director
Order of Battle Team
Photo Interpretation Team
CIC Team
Language Detachment (ATIS)
I & E Section
Judge Advocate & two clerks
Finance Detachment (-)
CWS section

Division special staff officers present on assault echelon but not shown above were Provost Marshal, Signal Officer, Ordnance Officer, Engineer Officer and Quartermaster. These staff representatives travelled with the assault echelons of their various organizations. Inclusion of the Division Judge Advocate is explained by the fact that this staff officer functioned as Division Civil Affairs officer in addition to his normal duties. Inclusion of a small finance detachment was on the order of higher headquarters to make immediate payments for Filipino labor which might be utilized in the early organization of supply dumps on the beachhead as well as for the prompt redemption of improvised guerrilla currency which had been in circulation during the Jap occupation.

All other division headquarters staff sections remained in the Division rear echelon under the command of the division Inspector General who was senior officer of those remaining to follow on the "R plus 10" Days rear echelon lift. (46)

For this operation the G-1 section was supplemented with one NCO from the Adjutant General's section to function as a records reports, and statistical clerk. One officer and two enlisted men from the Adjutant General's section accompanied the G-1 section to serve as advance AG representatives. This AG group was deemed necessary to handle any casualty reporting that occurred as well as providing custodial service for outbound mail until regular postal service could be reestablished. The belated arrival of a Quartermaster Graves Registration Section a day prior to sailing made it necessary to split the section between the G-1 section in the assault shipping and the Quartermaster Company advance elements on the "R plus 2" lift as an expedient. Upon arrival in the objective area all of the Graves Registration personnel would revert to control of the Division Quartermaster.

THE MARCH ACROSS MINDANAO

After an uneventful sea voyage of approximately four days duration, the division convoy stood off of Parang, Mindanao, early on the morning of 17 April 1945. At 0630 hours the preliminary naval and air bombardment commenced simultaneously to soften up the assault beaches. Naval craft were able to deliver rocket fire at close range in addition to normal naval gun support. (47) At 0800 hours the 3d Bn., 21st Infantry Regiment successfully landed at Malabang and proceeded to secure the airfield as planned. At 0900 hours RCT 19 commenced landing operations at Parang, reorganized and pushed out to establish the beachhead perimeter. The two (46) Personal knowledge; (47) Personal knowledge.

beaches were excellent but extremely narrow. The Parang beach was only 300 yards long for assault purposes. Initial resistance on the two beaches was practically non-existent. RCT 21 (-) landed behind RCT 19 after clearing Bongo Island in the Parang Harbor and then pushed out to strengthen the perimeter already established by the 19th. Leading elements moving out of the perimeter to the southeast found that every bridge, of which there were many, across streams leading to the coast, had been destroyed. Reconnaissance to the east encountered only light opposition. By the end of "R" Day a beachhead approximately 4000 yards deep at Parang had been established and the Malabang airstrip was receiving traffic to the north.

On "R plus 1" Day elements of RCT 21 assaulted Cotabato to the south amphibiously. Reconnaissance began at once of the Mindanao River to determine if the river route was satisfactory to support troop movement inland. This was done with the assistance of attached engineer boat and shore units and naval cooperation. RCT 19 continued to push inland. By the evening of "R plus 1" the division had accomplished its initial mission assigned by Eighth Army. The Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area was secure with a substantial beachhead established. This "R plus 5" Day objective of Eighth Army was accomplished four days ahead of schedule. (48)

During the next few days RCT 19 continued to push aggressively inland. Heat exhaustions were prevalent due to the nature of the overgrown roads. Frequently the trail was actually a tunnel made by the foot troops through the tall cogon grass and thick vegetation. From time to time light resistance was met including a short vigorous scrap at the junction of the Parang-Cotabato-Kabacan Roads. Continual reports of Jap soldiers and civilians were received from the north flank indicating their movement eastward parallel to our road but they showed no inclination to fight. Additional reports indicated that enemy forces of unknown strength were

(48) A-6, p. 25.

moving in from Sarangani Bay. These reports were later proved to be erroneous in that the enemy were retreating to the Sarangani Bay area. (49)

RCT 19 and advance elements of RCT 21 approached Fort Pikit at about the same time on 21 April, "R plus 4" Days. The 19th arrived by foot and the 21st had utilized the water route of the Mindanao River in small landing craft. The river proved to be an excellent route navigable as far inland as Kabacan but terminated at Fort Pikit for expediency of military operations. RCT 34, the division reserve, had landed at Parang on "R plus 2" Days as scheduled and also moved inland on the river route to Pikit. At this point the 34th took over the lead from RCT 19. Although heavy resistance was anticipated in the area between Pikit and Kabacan it did not materialize other than for brief skirmishes.

Securing the Pikit-Kabacan area was deemed important as it was the junction of the tactical north-south and east-west road net. At this point, the Commanding General, Eighth Army made the decision to employ the 31st Infantry Division which had just landed at Parang. It was directed that the 31st Division would follow the 24th Division to Kabacan and then fight north up the Sayre Highway while the 24th pressed on to the east to the Davao Gulf. At the same time Eighth Army decided to employ the RCT 108 (a detached unit from the 40th Infantry Division) on the north shore in the Macajalar Bay area. The 108th would drive south to join up with the northbound 31st Division. This action together with the 24th Division on the gulf would insure a full corps envelopment of the Davao area. (50)

All efforts were made to gain speed as with each day it became increasingly evident that the Jap was badly upset as to the whereabouts and strengths of the American forces. Also there was reason to believe that his communications were inadequate and that some confusion might exist in

(49) A-2, p. 3; (50) A-6, p. 34.

his command channels.

No stops or delays were taken by the 24th Division to reorganize or establish a base. The Mindanao River now served as a main supply route from the west coast inland to Fort Pikit, a distance of more than 60 miles. This eliminated the necessity of maintaining miles of poor road which at best was questionable as to whether it could sustain heavy trucking. A small supply dump was established at Fort Pikit by transferring a minimum of supplies from landing craft directly to the shore. (51)

At Kabacan, RCT 21 was placed in corps reserve. RCT 19 and RCT 34 continued the march to Davao Gulf with the 34th still leading. Only light resistance continued with relatively weak delaying positions and road blocks. The latter were lightly held by the enemy forces and were brushed aside as the two RCTs gathered momentum. Casualties due to heat exhaustion continued to be high as the rapid foot march continued. The rough terrain, destroyed bridges and narrow roads were the biggest hindrance in the advance. RCT 34 made continuing rapid progress until the village of Digos located near the east coast was reached. Here a strong defensive position held up the division advance for one day. RCT 34 was able to finally push the defenders to the northeast in the vicinity of the village of Guma where the enemy was effectively blocked by a battalion of the RCT. This enabled the balance of the RCT to push to the coast to capture the Padada Airdrome, one of six big airdromes along the northwest coast of the Davao Gulf. RCT 19 followed the 34th to the gulf and then reassumed the lead for the push up the coast to Davao. (52)

Summary of the rapid division advance across the island is contained in Map D herewith. The division traversed approximately 110 miles of rugged tropical terrain from Parang to the Davao Gulf in 12 days. The infantry elements accomplished all of this by foot movement as no motor marches (51) Personal experience; (52) A-2, p. 4.

were feasible due to the tactical situation, nature of the terrain and lack of motor transport. Aerial resupply of leading elements was the rule rather than the exception due to the poor ground routes forward and the distance of supply bases to the rear.

This rapid march prepared the way for an immediate assault on the main Jap positions expected to be found in and around Davao.

DAVAO GULF OPERATIONS

ROTC 19 started movement up the coast from Digos to Davao on 30 April, the same day it had arrived on the gulf. Difficulty in movement forward was caused by many blown bridges and by palms felled across the road. In most cases these obstacles and demolitions were not strongly defended. The division reconnaissance troop, when possible, preceded the infantry and assisted in driving away many small enemy detachments. Capture of the small village of Santa Cruz, some eight miles north of Digos on the coast gave the division a satisfactory beach for use as a temporary supply point. (See Map D) LSTs were immediately routed around the island from Parang with critically needed supplies and it was no longer necessary to maintain the long overland supply route. (53) While the 19th moved northward, RCT 34 remained in the Guma-Digos area to destroy all remaining organized Jap resistance. This was a time-consuming task that fully occupied the RCT until 12 May. The Japs were finally defeated here and the remaining disorganized handful of what was once two enemy battalions withdrew to the high ground around Mt. Apo in confusion. (See Maps C and D)

At this point the intent of the Japanese high command was still a mystery. Little aggressive action had been encountered although intelligence confirmed the fact that large numbers of Jap troops and civilians were in the Davao Valley somewhere. Strong enemy beach defenses had been flanked all the way north from Digos indicating that the greatest concern (53) Personal knowledge.

of the Jap had been a landing from the sea. (54)

In spite of the presence of Jap forces of unknown strength a short distance inland, the rapid advance was continued along the coastal road without major enemy interference. RCT 19 seized Daliao plantation and airdrome, then Talomo and continued pushing north to Davao. (See Maps D and E) At this time RCT 21 was released to the division from its mission of Corps reserve by X Corps. After determining that the Mintal-Tugbok road leading northwest from Daliao was the main road into the Apo mountains RCT 21 was employed in this area. This action was based on captured plans which indicated the Jap would set up his final defensive area on high ground in the Apo mountains in the vicinity of the Kibawe Trail. (See Map E) After heavy fighting one battalion of the RCT reached Mintal by a cross country move from the coast while the remaining two battalions worked up the road from the coast. It was now apparent that the division was in contact with the main Jap forces. Further reconnaissance inland met strong defensive positions although the continued advance along the coast was possible.

While the 21st was engaged in this maneuver, RCT 19 still continued north to Davao. Before the RCT could move into Davao it was necessary to clear the commanding hills northwest of the city. This was done by neutralizing the one imposing hill with one battalion and slipping by the two remaining battalions to attack the city. On 2 May the 19th forced a crossing of the Davao River which parallels the city and commenced to clear Davao of the enemy. By 4 May the city was secure and the regiment returned to complete the time-consuming task of clearing all the high ground around the city. With the capture of Davao the main tactical objective of the division had been accomplished but the mission of pursuing and destroying the enemy in the mountains still remained. (55) The 140 mile march from (54) Personal knowledge and A-2, p. 5; (55) A-6, p. 49.

Parang to Davao was completed in fifteen days.

At this point the division was ordered to conduct strong reconnaissance towards the Kibawe Pass and to gain contact with the guerrilla forces at the head of the Davao Gulf. The latter mission required a long advance and was a dispersion of forces from the main military operation. (56) However, the 19th was ordered to continue up the gulf from Davao to meet the guerrilla elements. After this was accomplished it was planned that the entire division effort would be turned up the Mintal-Kibawe Road where the main Jap positions were now believed to be located. (57)

Commencing 17 May, RCT 19 moved slowly north of Davao due to vigorous enemy activity in the form of infiltration and defensive tactics of employing heavy mines and bangalore torpedoes on all roadways. Jap naval troops defending in this sector proved to be aggressive in the matter of counterattacks and in ambushes. The 19th continued to make slow steady progress and finally their patrols contacted the guerrillas on 24 May in the vicinity of the Tagum River at the head of the Davao Gulf. This was a distance of 24 miles from Davao City. After contact was made the regiment turned west from Panacan on the coast into the hills to advance on the Mandog area. (See Map E) It was expected that the strongest resistance of the Jap naval forces would be met in this area. The Mandog area was northwest of Mintal where the 21st was deeply involved at this time.

Returning to the situation of RCT 21 in the vicinity of Mintal at this time, it was apparent that this unit had a task beyond the capabilities of a force of this size. As elements of RCT 34 completed their mission in the Guma-Digos area they were shifted northeast battalion by battalion to the right of the 21st to strengthen that position. The situation now developing indicated great Jap strength north of Mintal. More captured plans indicated that this was the western abutment of the Jap main (56) A-2, p.5; (57) A-6, p. 54.

defensive line facing the Davao Gulf. The enemy in this vicinity fought well, took heavy losses and were not afraid to act aggressively.

At this time the combat team formations were dropped with the artillery battalions reverting to general support under the Division Artillery. This had not been feasible prior to this time due to the rapidity of movement and isolated nature of operations of each separate infantry regiment.

In this area in which the division was now employed a type of vegetation was encountered that proved to be a great handicap for the balance of the campaign. It was the abaca or hemp plant from which the famous Manila rope is made. It closely resembles the banana plant but at times grows to a height of twenty feet. The area from Daliao north and northwest was under extensive cultivation with abaca. War conditions prevented normal harvesting and the vast fields were quickly overgrown until the stalks at times were nearly a foot in diameter and no more than a foot apart. Lead infantry scouts operating in this country were frequently fired upon at ranges of no more than five yards with no one being able to observe the fire. The Jap made the most of this heavy growth for ambushes.

(58)

Beginning with the Digos, Mintal and Davao actions casualties in all combat elements of the division continued to be heavy due to tough progress in the thick abaca fields as well as the close proximity to the main Jap positions. By the end of May, the infantry battalions were understrength approximately 400 men each. One shipment of approximately 2,300 replacements was received at this time but the understrength obviously continued to be a real problem. Earlier on 11 May, the 3d Bn., 163d Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Division from Zamboanga was attached to the division as a small added source of strength. (59) Initially, this battalion released division combat troops guarding rear installations in the Davao area.

(58), (59) Personal knowledge.

Later, due to continuing loss of strength it was necessary to commit this battalion as well as RCT 162 of the same 41st Division which had arrived from Zamboanga and was also subsequently attached to the 24th to bolster the depleted division strength during the latter part of May.

The division plan of attack now was to proceed up the Mintal-Ula-Galinan Road with two regiments abreast to get at the main Jap positions. Meanwhile the 19th Regiment was reducing the naval garrison to the north-east in the Mandog area and would be employed with the other two regiments as soon as possible for a coordinated effort. (See Map E) Due to a critical understrength it was necessary that the 21st Infantry be withdrawn and placed in a rear area rest camp at this time. Thus the attack continued with the 34th Infantry and 162d Regiment reinforced by the 3d Bn, 163d Infantry pushing up the Ula-Galinan Road. The terrain at this stage was particularly rough with the advance heading directly into the formidable obstacle of Mount Manoy, located just beyond the village of Galinan. (60) Due to extreme nature of the terrain this could not be avoided. The nature of this fighting was typical of all Pacific operations against the Jap. Battalions of infantry regiments fought practically independent actions supported and tied-in with fire plans of supporting weapons and artillery.

By 16 June it was evident that although the Jap was still delaying fiercely, his communications and command had begun to disintegrate under pressure of the continuing attack. On 19 June the 19th Infantry joined the action after turning the final Mandog area mop-up to guerrilla forces. This provided a final three regiment assault on the Jap positions. In the last week of June 2000 more replacements were received to further strengthen the organization. By the time the advance troops approached Mount Manoy the Jap forces were in remnants and were in full retreat to the high mountains to the West. Elements of two regiments continued the pursuit through

(60) A-2, p. 8.

the Manoy pass as far as Kibangay which was found to be the forward limit of jeep traffic under existing weather conditions in the hills. Road blocks and heavy patrolling were continued here with no particular effort being made to advance further into the mountains. Disorganized and without supplies the remnants of the Jap forces were bottled up in the mountains until "V-J" Day on 2 September 1945. (61)

As compared to the fast move across Mindanao which was accomplished in approximately twelve days, the action in the Davao Gulf area required sixty days of hard fighting in unfavorable terrain against a fanatical enemy with an additional sixty days mopping up period that continued until "V-J" Day.

Although the Victor V operation officially terminated on 30 June 1945, for practical purposes it did not end until "V-J" Day. One additional major operation was staged after 30 June by the 24th Division in Mindanao. A provisional amphibious task force was sent south to the Sarangani Bay area to destroy scattered enemy groups in that region. The Jap had garrisoned this area heavily early in the war but most of the troops were later shifted to Leyte, Davao and Digos. The Sarangani Task Force consisted of a heavily reinforced battalion of the 21st Infantry Regiment, a guerrilla battalion and portions of a US anti-aircraft Group functioning as infantry. The battalion of the 21st landed amphibiously on 12 July in the Sarangani Bay area from Talomo while the guerrillas and anti-aircraft infantrymen marched overland from the north. These three forces conducted vigorous patrolling actions and destroyed small enemy forces in this area from 12 July to 11 August 1945 when the operation was considered completed. 444 Japs were killed during this period with a task force loss of 14 killed and 13 wounded. (62) (See Map C)

(61) A-2, p. 8; (62) A-6, p. 75, personal knowledge.

G-1 OPERATIONS, MARCH ACROSS MINDANAO

Elements of the division command post in the assault echelon commenced landing on the Parang beach on "R" Day at "H Hour plus 20 minutes" (0920 hrs. 17 April) from their several amphibious craft as originally planned. The command post group assembled in a coconut grove about 1000 yards inland from the beach in the vicinity of the CP of RCT 19, the assault regiment. By 1100 hours all personnel and vehicles of the division OP assault echelon had landed and assembled in the grove ready for operations. At this time a command decision was rendered that the CP could be established in this area until the "R Day" progress of the infantry regiments could be determined. Organization of the CP area was made immediately by the G-1 and the Headquarters Commandant. Tentage was pitched and staff sections commenced operations without delay. Composition of the CP followed the discussion earlier in the G-1 planning phase of this monograph with the addition of a signal detachment of 75 men and officers from the 24th Signal Company and the 24th Military Police Platoon (-) consisting of 50 men and officers. These two detachments normally moved with the division CP. The headquarters SOP provided that these detachments join the command group immediately after debarking from their respective vessels in an amphibious operation.

Layout of the command post was effected by the Headquarters Commandant with his plan following SOP standards of the division. This required only nominal coordination and supervision by the G-1. Due to the constant threat of Jap infiltration in any operation, the CP area was purposely kept small and compact at all times in order that OP personnel could establish an effective perimeter defense. All personnel were utilized for perimeter defense including clerks of each staff section on a shift basis.

G-1 activities on "R" Day in addition to coordination of details of the OP interior arrangement and defense with the Headquarters Commandant

were primarily concerned with securing accurate initial strength and casualty reports from organic and attached units of the division. This was difficult due to the unsettled tactical situation and the fact that many units had not yet landed. Only a minimum amount of communications had been established which delayed securing these reports for some time. A complete report was not available due to these circumstances until "R plus 2 Days". On the morning of "R plus 2" Days the balance of the division CP personnel joined the command group when the reserve RCT convoy landed at Parang.

Early in the advance across the island it was evident that the division CP must displace rapidly and frequently in order to maintain effective communications with the leading infantry units. Commencing with the initial displacement from the beachhead forward on "R plus 2 Days" the CP displaced forward on an average of once each 36 hours to maintain control of its units. This rapid CP movement, keeping pace with the advancing troops, did not slow down until arrival of elements of RCT 19 in the Davao area about 2 May 1945. This was approximately two weeks after the initial assault landing. At this time the division commander made a command decision to locate his headquarters at Talomo which possessed an excellent beach and harbor. The Talomo area was subsequently developed into a headquarters site and supply base which served the division adequately for the balance of the Mindanao operation. This was a fortunate decision as it was later determined that the port facilities of Davao were useless due to destruction by the enemy prior to their withdrawal and previous bombings by our air force. (See Map D and E)

Displacement forward of ~~the~~^{the} division command post was extremely difficult at this time due to the many destroyed bridges and rugged terrain. When road and bridge conditions immobilized 2½ ton trucks from time to time this situation was met by forming a "stripped CP" consisting only of a minimum

number of essential staff officers representing the General Staff with the commander going forward to be in contact with the lead regiments. This small group utilizing only jeeps and 1/4 ton trailers was able to operate forward in most instances with a minimum of equipment. The bulkier vehicles and equipment followed when the roads and bridges could accommodate them. (65)

During the period of rapid advance from Parang to Talomo the G-1 Section was primarily concerned with CP organization, protection and displacement with the Headquarters Commandant, and the rendering of strength and casualty reports daily to G-1, X Corps. Due to the very nature of the fluid situation no other G-1 business of importance could be easily transacted during this time. The rear echelons containing the various unit personnel sections had not yet arrived from Mindoro with the detailed personnel records. Due to the continuous daily movement forward very little paper work other than the necessary recurring combat reports was prepared due to lack of time. Obtaining of the daily strength and casualty reports during this period was a difficult proposition due to lack of adequate communications and constant movement of units. Consequently, many times incomplete reports by necessity were given G-1, X Corps in the daily summary of strength and casualties. During this phase the daily summary was normally submitted as of 1800 hours daily by telephone or radio telephone in code. When communications with Corps failed due to being out of transmission range of wire and radio, a radiogram would be filed for immediate transmission when service was restored.

Reconnaissance for new command post sites was performed jointly by the G-1, Headquarters Commandant and a representative of the Signal Officer. Early in the advance, military maps proved highly inaccurate and prevented any detailed locations being selected from map studies. As the division (65) Personal knowledge.

worked inland the map inaccuracies increased as large portions of unmapped territory was traversed. Aerial photo coverage was poor due to poor weather at this time of year. This, as in other military situations, required personal reconnaissance of the ground under consideration. Once a suitable site was selected by the G-1, the Headquarters Commandant would complete the layout of the ground and signal communications would be installed prior to the move of the first echelon of the CP. In every instance, it was necessary for the Headquarters Company defense platoon to thoroughly search the new site for Jap snipers or infiltrators before work could be initiated in the new location. During Pacific operations the T/O strength of the Hq Co defense platoon was not sufficient to adequately perform the security mission in close tropical terrain. To correct this situation an over-strength of approximately 30 men was authorized on a detached service basis from the infantry regiments. This overstrength was composed of older battle-fatigued enlisted men whose value to the regiments during heavy operations was questionable.

Due to the relatively light work load within the G-1 section during the advance across the island, the Chief of Staff assigned various miscellaneous tasks to the officers of the section as the need arose from time to time. Many times these missions were out of the realm of military personnel work. These missions were of an operating nature and included a host of miscellaneous activities including inspections of supply dumps, liaison visits and traffic control missions at various critical points along the route of advance.

On reaching the Davao gulf the division CP advanced to the north directly behind ROT 19, then the leading infantry unit. The CP followed this regiment as far as Santa Cruz where it stopped for approximately 48 hours. In this time the necessary work was done for the establishment of the temporary base for supplies to arrive by water from Parang in addition

to other normal OP duties. The G-1 was active at this point in establishing a division military cemetery at Santa Cruz adjacent to the civilian cemetery already existing. This was the first division cemetery to be established during the operation. The matter of graves registration will be covered in a paragraph to follow.

From Santa Cruz the OP displaced north a few miles to Talomo where it was permanently located for the balance of the operation except for a few days in the latter part of June. At this time an advanced OP functioned at Tugbok for approximately ten days when the final drive was made on the main Jap positions in the Mt. Manoy area. (See Maps D and E)

As soon as the tactical situation slowed down the OP likewise stabilized at Talomo. This enabled the G-1 Section to assume its prescribed role in staff functioning in the division personnel matters. In the course of a few days time after arrival of the OP at Talomo the rear echelon arrived at Talomo about 5 May after making a combination water and overland move from Parang. Consolidation of both rear and forward echelons of the division headquarters at Talomo proved to be a fortunate arrangement which expedited the preparation and transmission of all types of administrative reports which otherwise would have been delayed. (64)

G-1 OPERATIONS, DAVAO GULF PHASE

The narrative that follows is divided into subparagraphs titled to correspond with the various G-1 activities and a brief discussion of the morale supporting activities.

STRENGTHS, RECORDS AND REPORTS

Considered under this paragraph is the G-1 Daily Summary (Strengths and casualties), the G-1 Periodic Report, Routine recurring reports and special reports.

With the division partially stabilized on the Davao gulf, the matter (64) Personal knowledge.

of securing prompt reports on daily strengths and casualties from subordinate units developed into a routine duty. Wire and radio was well-established to all major subordinate units at this time. All units normally rendered their reports as of 1800 hours daily by telephone or radio using code for security purposes. These were consolidated by G-1 clerks during the night and a completed report of totals was rendered to G-1, X Corps by radio telephone or radiogram the following morning. The daily oral reports were confirmed in writing within 12 hours time with the detailed breakdown of strengths and casualties by units. Some difficulty was experienced in securing reports from the small attached units of company, platoon or section size who were without communications. In cases of this nature, a G-1 clerk attempted to physically locate the unit by jeep, or, if this method failed, a contact was established at the nearby Class I supply point when the unit drew rations.

The G-1 Periodic Report was rendered weekly to Headquarters X Corps as of 2400 hours of each Thursday for the preceding week. No special problems were involved with the preparation of this report. Statistics required for the periodic report relative to personnel strengths, casualties, awards and decorations were kept current from day to day in the G-1 section by compilation of the daily summaries. Therefore, unit reports from subordinate headquarters were not required by G-1 as a basis for his periodic report. Any unusual circumstances or requests for inclusion in the report were usually obtained by telephone calls or through the exchange of personal staff visits between the division and lower unit staffs or from the commanders themselves.

Special reports of various types were called for from time to time by either Corps or Eighth Army G-1 sections. Normally, these special reports were furnished promptly as called for due primarily to the favorable location of the division Adjutant General in the same area as the G-1.

Also unit personnel sections were within reasonable distances which facilitated collection of data required and increased the amount of staff supervision and assistance which could be rendered by the division staff to these administrative units. Consolidation of data was accomplished expeditiously by the Adjutant General in every instance.

Routine recurring reports were handled by the Adjutant General directly with the unit personnel sections. Reports in this classification included monthly personnel requisitions, personnel rosters and detailed casualty reports. When appropriate, the Adjutant General furnished G-1 copies of consolidated reports for his information and for General Staff circulation.

REPLACEMENTS AND CASUAL CAMP

As previously mentioned in the G-1 plan, a provisional non-T/O casual camp was operated by the division under the supervision of the G-1. Cadre strength of the camp was one officer and approximately eight enlisted men serving in non-commissioned officer capacities. The personnel served in a detached service status with division headquarters from organic subordinate units. The mission of the camp was the reception and processing of casualties, hospital returnees and replacements within its capacity, received by the division to include delivery of processed personnel to the rear echelons of their respective organizations. Capacity of the camp was approximately 200 individuals. It was therefore realized at the outset that the camp could not handle the average replacement shipments as the latter always arrived in extremely large numbers. This did not preclude its use for replacements in small increments whenever possible. However, the real value in the camp was in caring for casualties and hospital returnees until their parent organizations could be located. This was frequently a time consuming process due to the nature of the island hopping operations typical of the Pacific warfare. Under these conditions some units would be absent on detached missions

for periods ranging from a week to two months. Casuals and hospital returnees usually arrived unannounced by ship or air from other islands in numbers ranging from 15 to 200 men at a time. Every effort was made to accommodate these individuals as comfortably as possible under the circumstances once their arrival was made known. For the Mindanao operation the casual camp was lifted from Mindoro to the objective area with the division rear echelon shipping. Upon arrival at Talomo with the rear echelon the camp was established at the Daliao plantation some five miles from the command post. (See Maps D and E) Some abandoned warehouses were available for this purpose. The plantation site also possessed a small wharf which accommodated amphibious craft of LSM and LCI classes which were used almost exclusively for inter-island personnel shipments in the Pacific. A truck schedule operated to provide transportation to the camp from the nearby Libby airstrip which was the only active air resupply strip operated by the division at this time. (See Map E) No particular problems were experienced in the operation of this camp other than securing grades and ratings for deserving enlisted personnel on duty with this installation.

During the Mindanao operation Eighth Army provided a total of 160 officers and 4451 enlisted replacements to the 24th Infantry Division. (65) This was a total of 66 per cent of all replacements furnished X Corps during the entire campaign. To be effective, a study of the replacement strengths must be coordinated with the division casualty record for the same period of time. The total division casualties for the operation were 425 killed in action and 2003 wounded in action or a total of 2428 casualties. The total casualties of all X Corps units including the 24th Division was 761 killed in action and 3078 wounded in action or a total of 3839. (66) From these statistics it can be determined that the division suffered 63 per cent of all casualties and received 66 per cent of all available replacements. (66) A-6, p. 79.

ments. However, it must be remembered that the division entered combat considerably understrength. Also from a review of the operation it can be considered that the division made the main effort in the plan of attack.

The total of 4611 replacements for the division were received in two equal shipments of approximately 2300 men each. All replacements arrived at Talomo by water from the 5th Replacement Depot, located on Leyte. Convoys of Navy LCI's were habitually utilized for transportation with each vessel accommodating 200 individuals in addition to crew. The normal voyage from Leyte to Talomo was of three days duration during which time the replacements subsisted on "10 in 1" rations. No bathing facilities were available to the passengers during the voyage.

The first group of 2300 replacements was received during the last week of May, 1945, or approximately five weeks after the division assault landing at Parang. At this time the division was heavily engaged in the Mintal-Digos-Panacan areas. All infantry battalions were approximately 400 men understrength. Replacements had been urgently needed for some time. In this respect, the G-1 had previously prepared in early May several casualty estimates for action in the immediate future. After approval of the Chief of Staff these estimates together with the division's depleted strength report at that time served as a basis for the preparation of several urgent radiograms to higher headquarters. The messages outlined the critical personnel situation and requested immediate assistance. All messages were dispatched under the personal signature of the Commanding General after his approval had been obtained. No official replies were received in writing to these messages although further verbal discussions followed during frequent visits on the ground by the Corps and Army commanders with the division commander.

Eighth Army replacement SOPs provided that all individual records of replacements in shipments of 200 or larger would be delivered to the division separately by an air courier while the personnel embarked by ship for the three day voyage to Mindanao. This procedure enabled the division to receive the records a full 48 hours prior to arrival of the personnel for the purpose of effecting early assignments. Due to the critical need for replacement riflemen the initial group of 2300 was divided equally between the three infantry regiments based on effective strengths at that time. This, of course, had the concurrence of G-3 and the commander. Spot checks of the AGO Forms 20 by the G-1 indicated that the entire shipment was composed of young draftees in the age group of 18 to 25 years with only a short period of basic infantry training as their only military qualification before being shipped overseas. It was apparent that the group had been inducted from the mid-western farm states and represented an above average physical profile and a higher than average of Army AGCT scores. No more than a dozen non-commissioned officers were included in the group. No specialists were found in the records nor were any other branches of service other than Infantry represented. The division Adjutant General effected the assignment of personnel after insuring an equitable distribution of AGCT groupings was made to each of the three regiments. Assignment orders were published immediately and all personnel records were then turned over to unit personnel officers at least 18 hours before arrival of the replacements. This enabled the lower units to proceed with their assignments to companies without delay. In most cases, the regimental orders were also published by the time the replacements arrived which aided materially in reducing confusion and delays in handling such a large influx of disorganized individuals. Upon arrival of the convoy of eleven LOIs at Talomo at approximately 0800 hours personnel were debarked immediately on the beach in a selected coconut grove. After a brief welcome by the

Commanding General and the distribution of a mimeographed resume of the division history to each man, the actual breakdown of personnel to regiments commenced. With the aid of a loudspeaker system the personnel were called out by name and loaded into waiting trucks for movement to the train bivouac areas of the respective regiments. Due to prior planning and organization this group of 2300 milling replacements were off the beach and en route to regiments within four hours after stepping down the LCI ramps. This permitted the receiving units a full seven hours of daylight to complete their processing, feeding and distribution to companies prior to dark. This reception plan was initiated and supervised by the G-1 Section due to a reluctance on the part of the Adjutant General to take positive and thorough action in the situation beyond the initial breakdown phase and publication of assignment orders.

The second group of 2300 replacements were received the last week in June approximately 30 days after the initial replacement shipment. At this time the division was at the point of completing the decisive defeat of the Jap in the Tamogan-Kibangay area with the coordinated attack of three regiments. One RCT plus one infantry battalion of the 41st Division had previously been attached to the division to bolster its depleted strength. While the infantry regiments were still understrength due to heavy casualties during the previous 30 days other divisional units were also experiencing a critical strength situation. This included the Division Artillery, the Engineer Battalion and the Medical Battalion. For reasons unknown, Eighth Army failed to direct the replacement depot to ship the personnel records of the second group in advance by air as was provided in their SOP. Instead, the records accompanied the troops aboard ship. No prior notice of the ETA of this shipment was received until 30 minutes before the LCI convoy approached the Talomo anchorage. At that time a delayed radiogram from the replacement depot was received announcing

the ETA of the convoy. As the convoy arrived in the late afternoon it was decided that personnel would not debark until the following morning, as no facilities existed ashore for a group of this size. In this interim period of 16 hours the G-1 prepared the debarkation and assignment plan while the Adjutant General classified the personnel. This shipment proved to be a well-mixed group of all ages and varying experience; both civilian and military. The group consisted of all Infantry except a group of approximately 300 horse cavalymen which represented the remnants of The Cavalry School cadre from Fort Riley, Kansas. Within the cavalry group were considerable numbers of specialists including horseshoers, harnessmakers and saddlemakers, however, there was no need for these skills within the division. An inspection of the records by G-1 indicated that the group was representative of the southern and southeastern United States. Physical profiles were average or below and the distribution of AGOT scores was relatively low in comparison with the first shipment. A liberal scattering of non-commissioned officers was included with this group.

Due to a critical understrengths in the Engineer and Medical battalions and the Division Artillery as well as the infantry regiments it was necessary to screen out a certain percentage of replacements from the 2300 for assignment to these supporting divisional units. Selection was made by inspection of AGO Forms 20 with the determining factors being civilian and/or military experience, AGOT score, the various aptitude test scores and physical condition. Fortunately, this group as a whole possessed considerable civilian employment background as compared to the initial shipment which possessed none. In almost every case the civilian MOS was of greater aid than the military MOS in this selection for specialized duty assignments. In all, about 150 men apiece were assigned to the 24th Medical Bn. and the 3d Engr Combat Bn while approximately 500 were converted to Field Artillery and assigned to the four organic artillery units. The 24th

Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop was assigned the best of the horse cavalrymen and permitted to retain a 10 per cent overstrength. The remaining cavalrymen and the 1400 remaining doughboys were then assigned equitably to the three infantry regiments. The same assignment procedures were followed as outlined for the initial replacement group. Reception plans and sorting of personnel on the beach were also identical. However, it was not possible to forward the personnel records of the replacements to unit personnel officers prior to delivery of the men due to insufficient time. The records followed 24 hours later after the Adjutant General had published the necessary assignment orders. During the above assignment process the G-1 actively supervised the selection of personnel for transfer to units other than Infantry. This was necessary due to the lack of a qualified classification officer in the Adjutant General's section. Enlisted clerks initially screened out the cards of personnel reasonably qualified for transfer to other branches of service based on a brief evaluation of qualifications. Final selections were made by the G-1. Whenever possible the S-1 of the unit to which assignment was contemplated was consulted in the matter of the tentative assignments before final action was completed.

Consolidated personnel requisitions were submitted by the division to higher headquarters on a monthly basis. Special requisitions were authorized by higher headquarters at any time when deemed necessary. However, in spite of regular and emergency requisitions the necessary specialists as well as personnel by branch of service other than Infantry were not received.

It is appropriate to note at this point one situation experienced which is indirectly related to the replacement situation. Shortly after each of these two large replacement groups had been processed, large amounts of administrative paper work from the Zone of the Interior pertaining to the replacements was received by the Division. Typical items were incom-

pleted requests for dependency discharges, correspondence pertaining to insurance and allotments of pay, Congressional inquiries, charges against the soldier's pay for laundry, clothing and equipage and transportation, and other miscellaneous matters. Most of this correspondence had already been delayed 90 to 120 days due to the movement of the individuals involved. Although engaged in combat at the time, this correspondence was forwarded to subordinate units for action. Unfortunately, due to the long delays involved some of this paperwork required expediting.

DISCIPLINE, LAW AND ORDER

No particular problems in the field of Discipline, Law and Order were experienced during this operation other than the relatively small Table of Organization strength authorized for the Military Police Platoon of an Infantry Division. This platoon strength was not augmented with an overstrength at any time.

Prior to embarkation at Mindoro all garrison prisoners in the Division Stockade were released to their respective units to participate in the operation. Upon completion of the operation the records of all garrison prisoners were reviewed and appropriate actions taken to reduce or remit sentences accordingly if justified. A Division Stockade was established at Talomo as soon as the situation stabilized for confining individuals awaiting trial by General Courts Martial or final review of previous General Court sentences.

A separate record of the number of Court Martials during the Mindanao operation is not available. However, statistics for the period of 1 January to 30 July 1945 indicate the following total trials for the division and attached units: (67)

<u>General Court:</u>	<u>Special Court:</u>	<u>Summary Court:</u>	<u>Total:</u>
10	69	114	193

The above number of cases are not believed to be excessive for a reinforced division for a seven month period. The relatively high number of Summary Court cases was due to the Division Commander's strict policy

of fining all traffic violators by Summary Court action. Other contributing factors to the low Court Martial rate were lack of intoxicants and the fact that the division operated in extremely isolated areas far removed from any centers of population.

In regard to delinquency reports, the Division SOP provided that the Provost Marshal render all such reports to the Commanding General through the G-1 and Chief of Staff for review and notation before forwarding to subordinate units. This was feasible only because of the relatively few disciplinary violations occurring at this time. All barrios and towns including Davao were placed "Off Limits" to troops as soon as they were free of enemy. This was believed necessary due to the high incident rate of disease including venereal disease among the natives. Most barrios and towns consisted only of a group of nipa or palm shanties and a few frame buildings in extremely filthy and unsanitary condition.

During the Pacific War straggler lines were not utilized by the division under normal circumstances. This was due to the nature of the terrain and the methods of the enemy's operation. Straggler lines, straggler collecting points and straggler posts were not used in the Mindanao campaign.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Prisoners of War in the Pacific Theater posed no particular problem as few were taken during any combat operation. This was due to the reluctance of the Jap to surrender and the reluctance of the American to take prisoners in the jungle type of warfare.

A total of only 500 Prisoners of War was taken in the entire Corps during the Mindanao operation. No figures are available for the 24th Division's share of this total. During the operation, prisoners were received in small increments of two or three at one time. After interrogation

the Provost Marshal safeguarded the Japs until transportation to the PW processing center was available. This collecting point was operated by X Corps for Eighth Army at Parang. During the cross-island march, prisoners were evacuated to the rear by motor. After the situation stabilized on the Davao Gulf the prisoners were evacuated to Parang or Leyte depending on the number of prisoners and transportation available at the time. Normally, evacuation was accomplished by the regular Navy resupply craft (LSTs, LSMs, LOTS) which called regularly at Talomo weekly or oftener. Armed guards were furnished by the Provost Marshal for necessary escort and security for these water movements.

By early July when capitulation of the Jap appeared to be a likely possibility, the G-1, Provost Marshal and the Division Engineer jointly reconnoitered the Davao area for a possible PW campsite. A suitable location was found in several large cleared fields near Daliao, five miles south of the division headquarters. Engineer troops assisted by some reserve infantry units erected heavy fencing of twelve foot coconut logs and barbed wire. Housing consisted of tentage which was to be erected by PW labor if and when they appeared. Capacity of the camp for planning purposes was established at 10,000. However, following V-J Day, PWs and interned Japanese civilians in the area approximated 25,000 individuals. The original camp was therefore expanded with PW labor.

BURIALS AND GRAVES REGISTRATION

As noted previously in the planning phase, one Quartermaster Graves Registration Section of a Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon was attached to the Division for this operation. Attachment was not made until immediately prior to departure from Mindoro. Hence, there was little time for coordination between the attached unit and the Division Quartermaster. This was particularly unfavorable as the section had not previously supported

the division. Fortunately, no large number of deaths from combat occurred until the Division reached the Davao Gulf area. At that time RCT 34 received casualties in the Digos-Guma area. Prior to this initial heavy engagement all dead were buried in isolated graves along the route of advance or, if within motor distance of Parang, were evacuated to that town for burial in the Corps cemetery. To provide facilities for the Digos-Guma dead a Division Cemetery was established at Santa Cruz where a temporary supply base and dump area had been located by the Division. After securing G-1 concurrence, the Quartermaster and his Graves Registration Officer established USAF Cemetery Santa Cruz #1 in the town of Santa Cruz adjacent to the civilian cemetery. This installation served RCT 34 until approximately 12 May when it was closed at the termination of the Digos-Guma action. All further burials until the end of the Mindanao operation were then made at the division cemetery at Talomo (USAF Cemetery Talomo #1) near the division OP. Talomo #1 was established about 5 May to handle burials for RCT 19 and RCT 21 which were operating north of Santa Cruz. By V-J Day, Talomo #1 had more than 550 burials including approximately 25 native guerrillas buried in a sub-section reserved for that purpose. No enemy dead were interred in this installation.

Location of cemeteries throughout the Pacific was difficult due to a high water table normally found on most islands in the service areas near the beaches. G-1 and the Quartermaster maintained close staff liaison at all times regarding locating and maintaining division cemeteries. Isolated burials were avoided whenever possible. Whenever this did occur, the Division SOP required a map overlay of the burial location with written details. This overlay was forwarded to higher headquarters as an enclosure to the Weekly G-1 Periodic Report as required by higher headquarters.

After arrival in the Davao area there was no need for isolated burials

as cemeteries were well within supporting distance of all divisional units. The Assistant Division Commander took a personal interest in the matter of locating all Missing in Action personnel. Due to his constant attention to this detail all units took interest and pride in recovering all bodies of their comrades and insured proper burial in an appropriate cemetery. As a result of this attention to duty, the Division had no Missing in Action personnel at the termination of the Mindanao campaign. This was a major accomplishment when compared to the records of other similar units of the same strength.

The Division Chaplain and his Assistant alternated on duty at the Division Cemetery for the religious rites at time of interment. On occasions the regimental chaplains assisted with these duties.

Labor incident to burial and maintenance of the cemetery was furnished by the local military Civil Affairs detachment from native sources. At times mortuary supplies were difficult to obtain. Also the Quartermaster was unable to produce white paint for the cemetery markers through Engineer channels for some time. Eventually, paint was procured informally from a Navy vessel.

No serious problems of a G-1 nature relative to Graves Registration was encountered during the operation. However, the Quartermaster experienced some delay in properly closing out the personal effects of the deceased due to slow reports of Summary Courts appointed by the lower units for this purpose. This was corrected to some degree by telephone calls to S-1s on an informal basis by G-1.

MORALE (Supporting Activities)

Considered herewith in separate sub-paragraphs are brief resumes of the morale supporting activities normally coordinated and supervised by G-1 during the operation.

(American Red Cross)

Male American Red Cross welfare directors were attached to the division throughout combat. Normal attachment was one director per regiment, Division Artillery, separate division battalions and units, and one supervising Field Director attached to the division headquarters. These men rendered outstanding service to all personnel of the division by welfare work of all types and descriptions. This was done to a great extent by use of the official Red Cross radiogram service to the Zone of Interior. No other source of radiogram service was available to military personnel. In addition to welfare service, Red Cross personnel operated canteens and small recreation huts in each of the regimental train bivouacs of their respective units. This service was extremely popular and was enthusiastically received by the soldiers. G-1 coordination and supervision was effected jointly through the Division Special Service Officer and the supervising Field Director. The Special Service Officer handled recreational matters with the Red Cross while problems related to military welfare was handled directly between G-1 and the ARC Field Director. At no time were female ARC workers attached to the division.

(Post Exchange Activities)

Small quantities of Post Exchange supplies were received as limited water shipping became available by the latter part of May, 1945. At this time the division was still heavily engaged in combat. Initially merchandise was not balanced and inadequate for the strength of the command. Again, beer stocks reflected the same conditions as previously discussed during the Mindoro staging period. Issues were entirely inadequate permitting a ration of only six cans per man per month. This condition did not improve. However, at the time the division received short supplies of beer, service troops on nearby Leyte were receiving full issues of beer based on the Army authority of one case per man per month.

Higher headquarters furnished a post exchange officer to the division for operation of this activity. However, it was necessary for the division to furnish approximately thirty enlisted men to serve as warehousemen, clerks, checkers and cashiers. These individuals were secured by G-1 from subordinate units of the division and functioned on a special duty basis.

After the initial supply of post exchange items had been consumed, resupply was erratic and unpredictable. This was due to the critical shortage of inter-island shipping required at the time to support the many amphibious operations then in progress. All resupply of this type was shipped by water from Leyte bases. Post exchange supplies possessed a low shipping priority. This shipping situation did not materially improve until V-J Day at which time the flow of exchange supplies increased to a satisfactory level.

(Mail)

Mail was one of the most important morale sustaining factors of the war. After embarkation at Mindoro no incoming mail was received until the division stabilized itself on the Davao Gulf. This covered a period of approximately four weeks without mail service. The delay could not be avoided due to the fast moving tactical situation. Out-going mail, however, was collected from units at all times by the assault echelon postal clerks located at the division CP for that purpose until such time as the division rear echelon arrived with the APO unit. These two postal clerks utilized any available means of dispatching outbound mail during the march across the island. Initially, it was possible to dispatch mail with outbound Naval vessels in the objective area. However, as the division moved inland this was not feasible due to the distances involved. Frequently mail was made up into small packets and flown out with the wounded who were then being evacuated by air in L-5 aircraft. Liaison officers and couriers from higher headquarters were also persuaded to carry out mail

pouches when returning to their respective headquarters from time to time.

When the Davao-Talomo area was secured about 2 May, the division gained the Libby Airstrip located in that general area. While being a dirt strip it was able to accommodate aircraft up to and including a B-17. Libby Strip became the aerial resupply field for the division for the balance of the campaign. As soon as the strip was operative, higher headquarters was advised by radiogram. Immediately a daily courier plane service was established from Eighth Army headquarters on Leyte. In addition to other necessary air transported supplies, this C-47 service was utilized for mail. The first class air mail was received from the Zone of Interior at the Postal Regulation Station on Leyte and then was flown to Mindanao direct. Extremely fast mail service was provided by this system. It was not unusual to receive air mail letters on Mindanao at this time that had been posted only eight to ten days earlier in the United States. Parcel post arrived from the States by ship and was transhipped from Leyte to Mindanao by coastal vessels. This proved to be slow and irregular.

The division APO was established at Talomo in the division headquarters area as soon as it had arrived in that area with the division rear echelon. Normal postal services were provided immediately and maintained for the balance of the campaign.

The division commander continued to require a daily mail report from the G-1. Close supervision and coordination of the postal activities were therefore exercised by the G-1 through the division Adjutant General.

(Special Services)

Due to the rapid advance across Mindanao, the division special services officer did not function until the situation stabilized on the Davao Gulf. At that time due to the slow moving situation, the location of the rear echelons of the major divisional units were relatively stable as to location. These rear echelons provided the only "rest camps" to which combat fatigued infantrymen could be evacuated for a short rest period, food and baths.

The Talomo-Davao perimeter was firmly established by the end of May with relatively little danger from infiltrating enemy. In this perimeter was located the division service troops and the various unit rear echelons. At this time with command approval the Special Service Officer was able to circulate 16 mm. entertainment films from library stocks to all units. Stocks were sufficient to permit three showings a week on outdoor screens improvised in each of the areas.

Distribution of magazines and a few paper-backed books in addition to other special service items was made periodically as supply permitted. Special service supplies proved difficult to obtain due to the distance from the Leyte bases and the shortage of transportation.

In the early part of June two platoons of an Army Special Service Company were attached to the division. This unit arrived by water from the New Guinea area without prior notice. Upon arrival in the Talomo area it was discovered that the unit was understrength in personnel and did not possess the full assortment of qualified specialists as authorized by the appropriate Table of Organization. All equipment of the unit was in extremely poor condition and had lacked proper maintenance for some time. Replacement parts were impossible to obtain due to the isolated situation of the division. Due to the deplorable state of equipment this unit was of questionable value to the division at a time when morale sustaining activities were urgently needed. The two platoons were established in the Talomo area and attached to Division Headquarters Company for rations and administration. The division Special Service Officer utilized some of the personnel to operate a small library in the rear area and the balance to supplement his small T/O staff section of enlisted men. Replacement parts for the unit's equipment never did arrive which unfortunately prevented this unit from making any appreciable contribution to the morale activities of the command.

The division band was released from all unnecessary fatigue duty and labor details to be available for band concerts in the various train bivouac areas. Usually a meal hour was utilized for this entertainment

coordinated by the Special Service Officer. This idea personally advocated by the Division Commander was enthusiastically received by all personnel as no other source of music was available at the time. The band concert idea during combat represented a radical departure from the traditional mission of the band being utilized for guard duty, Quartermaster ration details or other menial tasks in combat.

No USO talent appeared until V-J Day in this area due to the extremely isolated location of the division.

(Religious Activities)

The normal religious activities were conducted whenever possible by the unit chaplains during combat without any unusual circumstances arising. Faiths of the various chaplains were balanced to accommodate most of the religious denominations represented in the division. Jewish services were conducted at frequent intervals by a Jewish chaplain assigned to X Corps who was available for stated services.

(Quartermaster Activities Relating to Morale)

As previously discussed in the pre-planning phase of the operation, the monotonous dehydrated and tinned ration continued to be a real morale factor within the command. This increased in importance the longer men remained overseas. At this time a high percentage of the troops had 36 or more months of overseas duty to their credit. The ration problem was particularly aggravated by the fact that the division closely associated with the Navy during amphibious operations. Due to their own peculiar situation the Navy was able to enjoy high standards of living and subsistence which were unheard of by the combat elements of the Army.

The ration on the cross island march was "C" and "K" types exclusively due to the inability of kitchen trucks to get forward over poor roads. Resupply of rations during this phase was frequently done by air drops without parachutes which were in limited supply. However, after reaching the

Davao Gulf, unit kitchens were able to properly serve their units with regularity.

When the division air strip was operative considerable fresh meat was flown in from Leyte to supplement the monotonous diet. Also a refrigerator ship from San Francisco arrived with several thousand cases of fresh eggs which were a welcome change from a long diet of the powdered variety. No other perishables were received. However, some bananas and papaya were available in limited quantities from the natives if individuals were prone to bartering.

No Quartermaster bath units were attached to the division during this operation. Each unit was required to exercise ingenuity in providing some type of bathing facilities for their men. Some arrangements were crude but effective. Only one Quartermaster laundry platoon was attached but due to its limited capacity it was able to support only the attached hospital and medical units in the division zone.

Lack of Quartermaster support was partially explained by a shortage of Quartermaster personnel for the operation. Only 2.45 per cent of the troop strength was allocated to Quartermaster units for the operation whereas 5 per cent was deemed essential for normal operations. (68)

(Unit Publications)

The Division Information and Education Officer provided a daily one-page mimeographed newspaper which was distributed with the rations at the Class I Supply Point. Spot news was reproduced from the daily GHQ news radiogram plus small news items of the division. No report on the effectiveness of this publication is available. It was the only source of world news to the soldier at this time, however.

(Finance Service)

No problems were presented in payment of troops. This was done
(68) A-6, p. 187.

regularly as the situation permitted. The Finance officer periodically publicized the various methods available of remitting cash to the Zone of Interior available to the soldier to ease the burden on the APO money order section.

(Leave and Rotation)

During the Philippine campaigns of the Pacific War there were no provisions for leaves within the theater for officers or enlisted personnel. As previously mentioned, no rest or leave areas existed for combat personnel in the Philippines. This was due to the extreme jungle terrain of the islands and the total absence of any large centers of population suitable for the establishment of leave centers. The absence of rest centers coupled with the relatively poor ration and severe climate of the tropics would indicate the advisability of a generous leave policy for combat personnel. Such was not the case.

As mentioned previously the division was activated in Hawaii in October, 1941 and served overseas continuously since that date. Therefore, a high percentage of the division personnel had accumulated prodigious amounts of overseas service by the time the Mindanao operation was in progress. For example, more than 50 per cent of the Division Artillery personnel had in excess of 36 months of overseas service at the beginning of the operation. This same condition was reflected in all other organizations where casualty rates were relatively low. A high percentage of the infantry officers also counted their tenure with the division from the Hawaii days in 1941.

Rotation to the United States and temporary duty for rest and recuperation in the Zone of Interior were both handled by General Headquarters on a monthly quota basis for all major commands in the theater. Rotation quotas approximated 5 officers and 150 enlisted men per month for the entire division. Temporary duty quotas fluctuated each month but usually

approximated the rotation figures. Quotas for temporary duty were never popularly oversubscribed due to the individual's reluctance to return overseas following a 45 day leave in the United States as he would sacrifice his overseas seniority. On the other hand, rotation quotas were entirely inadequate to care for the thousands of eligibles within the command. Policies of higher headquarters relative to rotation will not be discussed as it would be inappropriate and inadequate to criticize their policies without knowing intimately the particular situations of higher echelons which prompted those particular policies. It is desired to stress here only the division problem of an extremely small monthly rotation quota with thousands of eligible personnel. No division policy could be formulated which would be satisfactory to all. Under the circumstances, the monthly quotas were suballocated proportionately to subordinate units based on their percentages of personnel possessing the greatest periods of overseas service. Each subordinate commander allocated his small quota as he desired. Most units effectively employed the use of eligibility lists regardless of rank based on length of time overseas. One list usually combined both officers and enlisted men. When two or more men had the identical amount of overseas time a toss of a coin usually determined the relative priority. All commanders used this plan with discretion as on occasions it was necessary to modify the policy to take care of particularly deserving individuals due to emergency conditions or physical breakdowns. In every instance it was the lower commander's responsibility to take appropriate action due to his closeness to the situation. This was important as at this time emergency leaves and dependency discharges did not receive favorable consideration from higher headquarters. Procedures did exist for applying for the latter, but these were rarely granted during the active combat phases.

Needless to say, slowness of rotation affected individual morale to a certain degree but did not seriously impair the functioning of any unit.

MORALE (Awards and Decorations)

All recommendations for awards and decorations during the operation were submitted by subordinate units to the division Adjutant General as soon as the recommendations were prepared in the prescribed forms. The Adjutant General, after performing an administrative check forwarded the recommendations direct to the Chief of Staff for his consideration and recommendations to the Commanding General. The division commander personally took action on each and every recommendation. G-1 was utilized only in an advisory capacity when desired by the Chief of Staff or Division Commander. Frequently the Public Relations Officer was called upon to rewrite draft citations prior to publication insuring correct form and grammatical construction.

The above procedure was adopted after failure of a division awards and decorations board organized during the Leyte operation to properly act upon the large volume of recommendations in a limited period of time.

No statistics are available on the number of decorations awarded during the Mindanao campaign to determine the adequacy of the awards and decorations program. However, cumulative totals for all awards within the command from 7 December 1941 to 31 August 1945 are available for study.

They are as follows: (69)

Medal of Honor	4
Distinguished Service Medal	3
Distinguished Service Cross	39
Legion of Merit	20
Silver Star	642
Soldier's Medal	25
Bronze Star Medal	2127
Air Medal	<u>30</u>
Total:	2890

(69) A-14, p. 4.

In the absence of any awards and decorations policy or established awards quota from higher headquarters to determine adequacy of awards, the Infantry School G-1 instructional awards formula of measurement (number of personnel killed vs. number of awards) will be used. For the period of the above awards there were 1532 officers and men killed and 5239 wounded as a result of enemy action. Using the formula the index is established as follows:

$$\frac{2890 \text{ awards}}{1532 \text{ killed}} = 1.89 \text{ Index}$$

According to the Personnel Committee, The Infantry School, based on a study of World War II decorations in combat divisions, the rate as computed above should be between an index of 2 and 10 to be satisfactory. Therefore the number of decorations for the division can be considered to be below average for the four-year period of 1941-45.

The method of processing recommendations can be rated as barely satisfactory. This is due to the fact that all recommendations were channelled through the Chief of Staff and the Commanding General for consideration and final approval without any preliminary screening and consideration afforded by a division decorations and award board. It is hardly possible that these two key officers could possibly devote the required amount of attention to this important phase of morale activities and still accomplish effectively their command and staff responsibilities.

G-1 was charged with the responsibility of keeping a current record of all field grade officers in the command and their record of decorations. This file was reviewed periodically to determine the adequacy of the awards in view of recent operations. It was expected that the lower units would likewise record awards of their officers and key personnel to avoid the possibility of overlooking deserving personnel. No efforts were made by G-1 to equalize the number of awards within each major subordinate unit

as these numbers kept in fairly close balance at all times.

The supply of decorations for awarding to personnel was practically non-existent in the command throughout the war. The higher awards including the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Service Cross and Distinguished Service Medal for which the demand was relatively small, were available through the normal Quartermaster channels on request. The supply of Bronze Star Medals, Bronze Arrowheads and the various theater ribbons were not available since the early days of the war. In June, 1945 a small shipment of 1000 Bronze Star Medals were received by the Division due to the personal intervention of the Army Commander. This small shipment was not sufficient to meet current needs and certainly arrived too late for presentation to the thousands of combat men who had previously earned the awards but had already departed via the casualty route or rotation. (70)

Although the division was first committed to combat in the New Guinea area in January, 1944 the Combat Infantryman's Badges were not available for issue to the troops until approximately May, 1945; a period of 17 months later. No division shoulder patches were available during combat and were not received until mid-1946 when the organization was engaged in occupation duty in Japan. Likewise, chevrons of all enlisted grades and officers' insignia were most difficult to obtain at all times.

The reasons consistently given by the G-4 and Quartermaster representatives of higher headquarters for the shortages of medals and insignia was the perennial shortage of transportation into the theater. When considering the tremendous potential esprit de corps and individual morale values to be gained with these decorations it appears that the transportation shortage was not a valid explanation. Medals and insignia do not present a tonnage or bulk shipping problem for the logisticians. For example, the combat infantry badge supply for an entire division could

(70) Personal knowledge.

easily have been flown in from the United States in a partial air priority shipment without seriously interfering with the conduct of the war.

CIVIL AFFAIRS

Civil affairs in the Philippine Island campaigns were handled by U. S. Army teams designated as Philippine Civil Affairs Units, or, "PCAU Units". The teams varied in size but generally averaged six officers and thirty enlisted men. Most of the enlisted personnel were American-Filipinos who spoke the native dialects fluently.

Normal procedures called for attachment of one or more teams as needed to each infantry division staging for an operation. Under this procedure, one PCAU unit was attached to the division for the Mindanao operation. This unit followed closely behind the infantry units at all times during the rapid march across the island. When the situation stabilized, the team set up headquarters at Davao as soon as the city was partially cleared of the enemy. The unit rendered valuable aid in restoring municipal government in that town without delay and in caring for considerable numbers of refugees. Limited medical attention was furnished and some supplies were available for sale through the unit.

As mentioned previously, the division Staff Judge Advocate functioned as the Division Civil Affairs Officer during the Pacific War. At this time the Civil Affairs job was a non-Table of Organization requirement superimposed upon the regular staff sections. The Judge Advocate was selected for this assignment in addition to his other duties because of his legal qualifications, personal drive and the reasonably lighter work load in his staff section during combat phases. Enlisted clerks were taken from the Judge Advocate's office as needed.

The division Civil Affairs office provided the necessary liaison and coordination between the Commanding General, 24th Infantry Division, G-1,

and the local PCAU unit. No problems were experienced with the civilians during the combat phase. This is partially explained by the fact that the thousands of Jap civilians who were residents of Davao evacuated the town with the Jap military units when the city was abandoned in early May.

PROCEDURES

Promotion of commissioned personnel was accomplished in a satisfactory manner during this operation. While exact statistics are not available for the Mindanao operation, following is the record of promotions for the Division for the period of 1 January - 31 August 1945 which affords a representative summary for consideration of the subject: (71)

Colonel	2
Lieutenant Colonel	17
Major	43
Captain	113
1st Lieutenant	<u>141</u>
Total:	316

Recommendations for combat promotions from subordinate units were received at division headquarters by message form or radiogram. After the approval of the Commanding General these recommendations were submitted direct to Headquarters Eighth Army by radiogram. Army headquarters published promotion orders for company grade promotions and forwarded all recommendations for field grade promotions to General Headquarters for appropriate orders. Combat promotions were limited to officers in actual command assignments only.

Recommendations for non-command promotions were submitted in regular letter form and were processed through normal channels in the customary manner. The average time for completed action of a combat promotion was approximately ten days from date of initiation. The average time involved for completion of a non-combat promotion was approximately three to four weeks. The above recapitulation of promotions over a period of 7 months (71) A-14, p. 2.

indicates a liberal promotion policy within the limits of an Infantry Division Table of Organization.

It was necessary for the division Adjutant General to continuously trace recommendations for promotion to insure that no request went astray or was delayed by higher headquarters. This was particularly important when the division was assigned to a different army from time to time with the attendant changes in promotion policies and different procedures in handling of administrative matters.

No particular emphasis was placed on battlefield commissions for qualified enlisted personnel. During the period of 1 January - 31 August 1945 a total of 29 combat appointments to the grade of Second Lieutenant were granted to combat enlisted men. This relatively low figure is partially explained by the fact that officer replacements were available in most instances. For example, a total of 160 officers were assigned to the division during the Mindanao operation.

Nominations for battlefield commissions were handled in the same manner as the combat promotions in the division. Radiogram requests were utilized whenever possible to expedite the processing.

No officer reclassification problems were encountered during the Mindanao operation. Situations of this nature were normally taken care of within the division by transfers or reassignment within the command. One reclassification case initiated was never successfully completed due to the inability to substantiate the case against the officer to the satisfaction of higher headquarters.

INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS

Internal arrangement and movement of the division command post was discussed in previous chapters dealing with preliminary planning, amphibious embarkation, assault elements and the march across Mindanao.

CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

No civilian employees other than male American Red Cross workers were authorized for an infantry division during combat in the Pacific Theater. However, great numbers of native laborers were secured for all types of work within the division area as the needs arose. G-4 coordinated all requests for labor through a division labor officer within his staff section. Necessary priorities were established and the consolidated requests forwarded to the local civil affairs unit through the division Civil Affairs Officer. Payment of laborers was effected by the division Finance Officer.

G-1, therefore, was not involved to any great extent in the civilian labor situation within the division area.

MISCELLANEOUS

This final paragraph of the G-1 activities will be devoted to a few of the variety of so-called "personnel expedients" improvised within the division to meet special situations that continually arose from time to time under the stress of combat operations.

A few weeks prior to the embarkation at Mindoro for the objective area, the division artillery commander was suddenly hospitalized and evacuated to the Zone of Interior. No replacement was immediately available at that time. Due to the urgency of the situation, the division Chief of Staff, a senior Colonel of Field Artillery, served in a dual capacity as Chief of Staff and also as Division Artillery Commander. This dual assignment was performed in a highly satisfactory manner for approximately three months. At that time a replacement Chief of Staff was assigned to the division and the former incumbent continued as the division artillery officer. He was subsequently promoted to the rank of Brigadier General for his outstanding work as artillery commander in combat.

Continuous amphibious operations on a division level placed a tremendous burden of additional administrative work on the Division G-4. In this respect, the division normally assumed responsibility of the entire supply requirements for the division and attachments for the initial 30 or 45 days after arrival in any objective area. Also the division normally operated the beaches, harbor and supply dumps at all times. These extra duties, coupled with the responsibility of coordinating and planning for all amphibious shipping created more work than could be handled by the T/O authorization of personnel for the G-4 section. Therefore, the section's meager personnel allowance was supplemented by the addition of three officers. This was accomplished by utilizing the three T/O officer vacancies authorized for division liaison officers. This proved to be an excellent solution and eliminated the need of procuring officers on detached service from subordinate units at a critical time.

Due to the critical shortage of enlisted personnel, the division artillery commander experimented with formation of two 6-gun batteries per battalion instead of the T/O organization of three 4-gun batteries per artillery battalion. This expedient eliminated the need for all personnel in one battery except those men required in the actual gun crews. This new experimental organization permitted a more flexible organization for tactical purposes and saved much in manpower. At this time the batteries were 50 per cent understrength with no prospects of replacements.

(72)

All units utilized Filipino laborers to perform the menial duties normally required of basic soldiers. This enabled units to function with fewer personnel or release individuals for more important assignments. Included in these duties performed by native labor was handling of practically all supplies and ammunition, kitchen police and all types of unskilled

(72) Personal Statement of Brigadier General Hugh Cort, then Div Arty CG, Dec 1948

labor.

G-1 was frequently called upon to produce personnel to fill non-Table of Organization positions. Practically all these jobs were essential to the combat mission but had not been specifically provided for in the then current Tables of Organization. The division casual camp and an over-strength of 30 men for the Division Headquarters Company Defense Platoon have both been mentioned previously and are in this category. In addition, personnel were provided for a division Public Relations Section, post exchange section, a division historian and an airfield operations ground crew. All personnel for these jobs, by necessity, were serving on a detached service basis with the division headquarters. Due to the understrength within the command the G-1 endeavored to keep the numbers of detached service or special duty personnel on division missions to a bare minimum at all times.

Worthy of comment at this point is one situation that occurred which is a classic example of personalities and rank working counter to the intent of tables of organization and accepted tactical doctrine. The X Corps Artillery Headquarters in the Mindanao operation had the sole mission of supporting only the 24th Infantry Division. However, the corps artillery commander was a Colonel filling the T/O vacancy of a Brigadier General. At this time the division artillery commander was a Brigadier General. To solve this delicate dilemma of relative rank, the unique solution of attaching the corps artillery headquarters to the division artillery headquarters was developed. The entire matter was handled smoothly and resulted in extremely good combined artillery support for the Infantry. This was highly desirable due to the isolated nature of the division operation.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Following is the analysis and criticism of the G-1 activities of this

operation:

It is amazing to note the importance of the transportation factor which was exerted indirectly on this situation. From the very beginning, for lack of adequate water transportation the composition of the initial amphibious assault elements were revised several times until they were pared down to fit the transport space allocated. Again, lack of transportation denied shipment of special service equipment and post exchange supplies in adequate amounts. Lack of transportation from the Zone of Interior undoubtedly affected the availability of replacements to General Headquarters and the Eighth Army. In turn, the intra-theater shipping shortage affected the delivery dates of replacements to the Division. Supply people cited the transportation shortage as a contributing factor to shortages of supply including medals and decorations. And finally, the lack of transportation was also advanced as a partial answer for the slowness of rotation and stateside leaves. The transportation problem in a two-theater war can be readily appreciated. However, after hearing the same trite explanation for all problems over years of combat, a division staff officer darkly suspects the classic "shortage" might be used more as an excuse rather than a valid reason by the higher level people. On division level it is impossible to ascertain the true facts or to initiate action to correct the deficiencies.

Infinite detailed organization and coordination is required for the proper organization of an amphibious operation. This same care and detailed planning was executed by the G-1, G-4 and Headquarters Commandant in outloading the division headquarters for the operation. Unfortunately, the influx of last-minute priority cargo and passengers from higher headquarters upset to a degree the balance of the "R" and "R plus 2" Days echelons of the headquarters. However, the necessary readjustment of the Headquarters embarkation plan did not seriously handicap the functioning

of the staff sections while afloat or immediately after landing in the objective area. Rather, the safety cushion, insofar as staff personnel was concerned, was decreased to accommodate the late freight. Based on two years of amphibious experience it is believed that there will always be some last-minute additions to passenger lists and freight manifests from higher headquarters.

The matter of early and complete strength and casualty reports from all subordinate units of a division on "R Day" of an amphibious assault cannot be overemphasized. It is acknowledged that such reports will always be difficult to obtain due to the confusion of combat and the lack of complete communications on the beachhead. Also some units will still be afloat with the reserve elements. In this operation, a complete accurate report was not obtained until the morning of "R plus 2" Days. However, all of the key major combat units had reported by "R plus 1". This is believed to be too late to be of much assistance for staff planning and reporting. Fortunately, resistance on the assault beaches was almost non-existent which minimized the importance of early reports. Had a strongly defended beach been encountered the lack of complete casualty figures would have been a problem of major importance.

Displacement of the division command post was frequent and prompt to keep up with the forward advancing infantry elements. The organization of a "stripped CP" consisting of only jeeps and trailers when the roads would not carry larger vehicles was a wise move. This abandonment of comfort, convenience and some equipment in favor of quick advancement for control purposes was sound judgement which does not call for further elaboration. In regard to control, it will be noted that the division CP landed in the assault echelon on "R" Day at H Hour plus 20 minutes. This was a calculated risk in which the commander gambled against a strongly defended

beach to secure division control ashore as early as possible in the assault. The division amphibious doctrine called for the CP to be ashore as soon as possible in every situation. Control of a beachhead in the early assault phase cannot be easily maintained from the convoy flagship.

Any staff officer must be ready at any time to assume any duties which are reasonably within his capabilities as the situation may dictate. Use of the G-1 officer personnel by the Chief of Staff for various unrelated tasks during the march across the island was sound utilization of available manpower. The staff section was practically inactive due to the fluid tactical situation and welcomed this activity. Later, when replacements were flowing into the division, the G-1 by necessity, quickly assumed the initiative in classification, assignment and reception of personnel greatly beyond the General Staff concept of supervision, planning and coordination. This was necessary due to deficiencies and the lack of aggressiveness in the Adjutant General's section at this time. Had the G-1 not taken positive action in these situations by becoming an operating staff officer, the whole replacement assignment plan may have well bogged down completely. This would have been unfortunate as it would have allowed lower units insufficient time for their own assignment procedures. Also the replacements would have been subjected to needless delay and waiting under the most unfavorable conditions after debarkation. Based on four years experience, a General Staff Officer on division level can be expected to perform a certain amount of routine operating of all types to bridge the gap of ineffective action on the part of his own division staff or that of a higher headquarters.

There is no argument against the need for division cemeteries in an isolated operation. Prompt establishment of cemeteries is a necessity to avoid isolated burials by the combat units. This was clearly demonstrated in the tropics where decomposition of corpses was a rapid process. In

regard to Missing in Action personnel who are reasonably presumed to be dead, this operation demonstrated that if the higher commander expresses interest in locating the deceased, the MIA rate can be appreciably reduced.

From the experience of this operation, the replacement situation can generally be rated as unsatisfactory. First, the division outloaded for the objective area understrength 100 men in each infantry battalion plus shortages in the service elements. No replacements were received until approximately five weeks after the assault landing. At that time each infantry battalion was about 50 per cent effective in strength. Arrival of the first increment of 2300 replacements was unfortunately timed to coincide with the division's engagement in some of the heaviest fighting of the campaign. The shipment of 2300 was absorbed by understrength battalions only with difficulty while actively engaged with the enemy. No time, therefore, was afforded the green replacements for orientation or battle indoctrination. Before arrival of the second increment of 2300 replacements thirty days later, it was necessary to attach one RCT plus one battalion from another infantry division to bolster the division strength. It became necessary to withdraw one organic infantry regiment from the line at this time due primarily to its inability to absorb the large influx of replacements. This was the same regiment which had received green replacements in Mindoro in exchange for the trained manpower it had transferred to the 2 RCTs staging for the Luzon operation. It appears that this one regiment had difficulty in absorbing replacements on Mindoro as well as Mindanao. Training and teamwork were needed here and could have been achieved only by the timely arrival of replacements. If higher headquarters had been more lenient and had settled for less than T/O strength RCTs for the Luzon attachment the disorganization of one regiment designated to furnish the necessary replacements would have been

obviated.

The second increment of 2300 replacements arrived in the last week of June. This was the final week of the official Mindanao operation. Their arrival, which was welcomed, did not materially affect the outcome of the final battle as it had already reached the decisive stage. Records of the replacements did not arrive in advance of the shipment nor was there any advance warning on the arrival of this shipment. Both of these deficiencies are inexcusable on the part of the replacement battalion on Leyte supporting the operation. It can be considered that the replacement battalion failed in its principal duty by permitting these inexcusable deficiencies to occur.

Although no official confirmation was received, it is assumed that no replacements other than Infantry and horse Cavalry were available for assignment to fill urgent requirements within the division for Medical, Field Artillery, Engineer and Signal troops. Fortunately, the second increment of replacements possessed some degree of civilian background to enable intelligent selection of manpower to supplement the understrength branches of service other than Infantry. This process was an emergency expedient and by no means perfect. However, prompt assignment of some replacements to the supporting branches of service insured continued combat support to some degree.

Had the replacement program been timely and adequate it might have been unnecessary to attach one RCT plus one battalion of infantry from another unit to augment the depleted division strength. Timely arrival of replacements would have enabled each green man to receive some unit training and combat indoctrination prior to entry into combat for the first time.

Arrival of personnel overseas without their personal affairs in order is unfair to the individual concerned and imposes an unnecessary administrative burden on the combat unit to which he is assigned. The administrative check could be best made at the Port of Embarkation prior to embarkation.

This would relieve the combat elements overseas of such responsibility. Once personnel are overseas it is difficult to complete such paper work thousands of miles removed from the source of affidavits and testimony.

The Quartermaster ration, air mail, post exchange and special service supplies are all important morale sustaining items. Fortunately, the mail service was generally excellent as judged by the 10 day period required for mail between the Zone of Interior and Mindanao. The Army ration was extremely poor but this condition had been reflected throughout the theater for years. Actually, the nutritional value was present but due to dehydrated and tinned components the food was monotonous and generally unpalatable. Staff action from division level could accomplish nothing to improve this condition. A command letter may have increased the amount of meat issued to the troops however. In the matter of post exchange and special service supplies it is probable that a command letter would have appreciably increased the amounts available to the division. Supplies were in the theater but the problem was in getting adequate transportation from the bases to the division area. Rear area base troops at this time were receiving full allowances of beer and also the perishable components of the ration. Too often during the recent war have combat troops taken second place to base units in supply, rations and so-called comfort articles of life. It is fully realized that the Infantry cannot expect living conditions equal to that of rear area troops but there must be vigorous efforts to equalize the distribution of the so-called "luxury" items during combat. In this situation, the importance of a regular adequate beer ration cannot be overemphasized due to the lack of other beverages and the hot tropical climate. It is exactly situations of this nature that gives the combat soldier the impression that he is being penalized by being a fighting man. This adversely affects morale and esprit.

Regarding the availability of medals and insignia, it is inexcusable that supplies of these items were not sufficient to permit presentation of combat awards as earned. The 17 month wait for the combat infantrymen's badges was excessive and inexcusable. The will to fight certainly lacks some stimulus without the prompt award of the actual decoration to the individual who earned it at a cost of sweat and blood. The old saw, "Too little, too late", is certainly appropriate in this case.

As previously stated in the narrative, the need for a division awards and decoration board was believed essential in this operation. The division commander and Chief of Staff could hardly devote the time necessary to pass on each and every decoration in minute detail. A decorations board properly functioning would have relieved the commander of some of this time consuming work. While the overall index of awards was generally low for a four year period it probably was adequate for this three month operation.

The new division Table of Organization has provided for inclusion of many staff sections and teams that normally were furnished in combat from personnel selected at random on detached service status or provided for by attached non-organic teams. The new T/O is based on combat experience and is believed to be sound. It relieves the G-1 of much detailed search for qualified personnel and further allows a definite T/O structure to allow for promotion and advancement.

Prompt promotion within the command served as a stimulus to all men. Use of radiograms to request combat promotions resulted in promotions being processed in the shortest possible time. The lower units likewise took care to expedite the promotions of enlisted men within their sphere of jurisdiction as promptly as the situation permitted.

Finally, to consider the staff functioning during this operation, a direct quotation is made from the after-action report of the Commanding

General, 24th Infantry Division which is believed to aptly sum up the situation and provide the most important lesson of the operation:

"It was found, as the operation progressed, that much erroneous, incomplete or ambiguous information was being transmitted, particularly upward, through staff channels. Given any opportunity, staff sections will quickly get the idea that they belong to "the intelligence service", "the operations service", or "the personnel corps" or "the supply corps". This frequently left the commander ignorant of the situation and takes from the commander his prerogative of making decisions which may be at variance with the recommendations, wishes or opinions of members of his own or higher staffs (as distinguished from higher commanders). The commander alone can accept the responsibility for information, requests and directives. This same situation occurred in World War I when many G-2s and S-2s thought they were part of a separate "intelligence service". The whole matter ended in the utmost confusion." (73)

LESSONS

Some of the lessons emphasized by this operation pertaining to G-1 activities are:

1. Close coordination with the Headquarters Commandant and G-4 by the G-1 is essential to accomplish proper outloading of a division headquarters for an amphibious operation.

2. Accurate daily strength and casualty reports are vital during the initial amphibious assault phase but are extremely difficult to obtain.

3. Rapid and frequent displacement of a division CP is essential to proper control in a fast moving tactical situation.

(73) A-9, p. 2, A-2, p. 13.

4. Division General Staff officers are frequently required by the tactical situation to necessarily subordinate their roles as coordinators and planners to that of operators.

✓5. Prompt establishment of division cemeteries are a necessity in a separate division operation.

6. All combat units should be brought to authorized strengths with trained replacements in sufficient time prior to an operation to permit combined training and complete assimilation of the replacements into the fighting team.

7. Supply of replacements during combat operations must be prompt, continuous, timely and adequate.

8. Supply of replacements during combat must be made in reasonably small continuous increments to facilitate processing and assignment to units.

9. It is possible in emergencies to transfer Infantry replacements to other branches of service within the infantry division if intelligent classification procedures are utilized.

10. Civilian MOSs of replacements under certain circumstances are of more value in effecting proper classification and assignment than is the military MOS.

11. Replacements must be available to lower units in sufficient time to permit processing and assignment to companies in daylight hours.

12. Replacement records should precede replacements to units to expedite assignment and classification.

13. All administrative paper work pertaining to personal affairs of replacements should be fully completed in the Zone of Interior prior to embarkation for overseas stations.

14. Inclusion of a replacement company, military government, public information and division historian staff sections in the new infantry

Tables of Organization are sound changes based on combat needs.

15. Post Exchange and special service supplies ~~is~~ essential parts of morale sustaining activities must be given high priorities for a division engaged in an isolated operation.
- ✓ 16. Mail must be handled expeditiously at all times.
17. Attached special service units must be properly equipped and manned to perform their mission.
18. While not a direct responsibility of G-1, the Quartermaster ration is a definite morale factor.
19. Adequate rotation and leave quotas are a necessity to sustain morale in a command where the majority of personnel have served overseas for excessive periods of time.
20. A division awards and decorations board is a necessity to assist the commander in achieving an adequate policy for awards.
21. An adequate Quartermaster supply of medals and awards must be on hand to insure prompt and timely recognition of achievements of the combat soldier.
22. Prompt promotion of qualified personnel is a stimulus to morale.
23. Lacking replacements of specific qualifications the G-1 must be prepared to recommend and improvise expedients to temporarily fill urgent needs.
24. The excessive use of staff channels by staff officers must be avoided to prevent erroneous and incomplete transmission of information to higher and lower units.
25. Staff officers must keep foremost in their minds at all times that they are only part of a commander's staff and the responsibility for information, requests and directives always remains with the commander.