

EVACUEE REPORTS-

CHRISCO, HOWARD

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION GENERAL STAFF

APO 500
13 June 1944

Philippine Evacuee Report #292

Subject : NEGROS Occidental
From : Howard Tom CHRISCO

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Name : Howard Tom Chrisco
Born : 1919 in Timber, Missouri
Education : 2 years High School
Service : Enlisted U.S. Army, Missouri, 7 March 1941
Assignment : Clark Field, Manila, PI
In PI since : 26 September 1941

Interrogated by G-2 GHQ

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Besides confirming the information given by Jay R. Snell and James F. Dyer (see Philippine Evacuee Reports #293 and #294) in regard to treatment by Japanese in Bacolod, Chrisco gave some additional information concerning the activities of the guerrillas in Negros Occidental which is regarded as being reliable.

CHRONOLOGY

- 9 April 1942 • Taken a prisoner of war at Bataan. Taken to Cabanatuan
- 21 May 1942 • Moved to Bacolod with 9 other Americans to drive American made trucks for the Japanese. Bacolod surrendered without any resistance.
- May 1942 to July 1943 • Drove trucks over all the coastal roads in Northern Negros. Probably ambushed more than a 100 times by guerrillas. Sometimes a few Japs were killed or wounded, other times no one hit.
- Sept. 1942 • Guerrillas ambushed two trucks and killed about 20 Japanese
- Oct. 1942 • Guerrillas armed only with bolos, burned two trucks and killed 18 Japs.
- 4 July 1943 • Escaped in truck with 6 other Americans and joined Col. Mata's unit in the mountains. Was not permitted to go South to contact Col. Abcede.
- Oct. 1943 • Stationed with Sub-Sector "C", Co. "G" under Lt. Pepari.
- 25 Dec 1943 • Accompanied guerrillas on raid on the town of Murcia. Japanese withdrew to the Municipal Building. Civilians reported that 2 or 3 Japs were injured.
- 29 March 1944 • Guerrilla attack on Japanese garrison at Murcia
- 27 April 1944 • General offensive against nearly all the Japanese garrisons all over the Island. Some garrisons occupied by guerrillas and reported that many Japs were killed. Heard that 27 were killed at Bais.



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Organization of Guerrillas in Negros Occidental The efficiency of the different units varies greatly, dependent upon the competency of the Commanding Officer. Generally, the organization and discipline is poor. There are a few exceptions where the ranking officer is a regular Army man or a former member of the Constabulary. The USARF men are in some of the units and they are generally much more efficient and dependable than the average enlisted man who is probably a farmer or laborer.

Col. Mata's Attitude Toward American Soldiers Col. Mata was definitely hostile to the American soldiers and seemed to resent their presence. Still, he refused to permit them to go South to contact Col. Abcede. He would not permit them to carry arms and separated them, placing each one with a different unit.

It was stated that the American soldiers were refused permission to take guns and conduct their own attacks against the Japanese. An effort was made to explain to the guerrillas that the previous attacks would have been more successful if the trucks had been permitted to pass by and the soldiers had then fired into the rear rather than at the cab which was protected with heavy armor. This advice was highly resented by Col. Mata.

Guerrilla Attack on Murcia Chrisco stated that he was more fortunate than his companions in that he was placed under Lt. Lopari, Commanding Officer of Co. "G" in Sub-Sector "C". Lt. Lopari was one of the few Officers in this area who really wanted to fight the Japanese.

On 29 March 1944 an attack was made on the Jap garrison located at Murcia, which was about 8 miles from the area where Company "C" was quartered. There were only a few Japs in the garrison but it was thought that reinforcements would be sent down from Bacolod. That night 12 men were sent in to attack the garrison. One sentry was killed and another injured. About 50 guerrillas were divided in two groups and placed along side the road from Bacolod to ambush the reinforcements, if any were sent. The following morning two trucks of Japs came along. Chrisco was placed in charge of one group. Both trucks were permitted to pass. Just as the second truck passed Chrisco said that he stepped out on the edge of the road and emptied a 30 round clip from a Thompson sub-machine into the Japs standing in the back of the truck, killing all but two or three. As he was changing clips one of the Japs shot him in the right elbow. He then retreated into the mountains.

As Chrisco opened fire on the second truck, the other group fired on the first one, killing several before retreating.

It was reported later by civilians that 26 Japanese and 8 members of the Bureau of Constabulary were killed.

MORALE: Because of the fighting done by the guerrillas in this area, the morale of both the civilians and the soldiers is higher than it is in most parts of Negros Occidental. The arrival of the guns and supplies from GHQ had a tremendous effect in raising morale and convincing the people that they had not been forgotten.

Prisoners of War In addition to confirming reports submitted by his companions, Chrisco stated that the following men were apparently in good health when he left the concentration camp in Luzon for Bacolod:

Darrel Edwards
Charles Clark
John Ed Reynolds
Major Beardon
Captain Eley

Johnnie Lancaster
Killian Bullard
Wiley A Smith
Paul G. Lee
Lt. Arnold

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