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May 1968

5th M.D.

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ded, leaving the units in the Bicol Region independent of the 5th MD, and support from the SWP.

3. Last Nov. 15, 1943, I went to Panday to contact the SWP through the facilities of the 6th MD. On Nov. 29, 1943, I landed in the forward CP of the District Intelligence located somewhere in San Plenisio, Iloilo, and after 23 days of continuous hiking, I was only able to contact Col. R. L. RELUNIA, Ex. Off., 6th MD, Col. JULIAN CHAVES, Asst. Ex.O., and Col. ANSO FRANCIA, District Sig. Officer. I was made to understand by Col. FRANCIA that Col. M. PERALTA, Jr. can nowhere be contacted, inspite of his efforts to contact him through his facilities and messengers and that his whereabouts is not known. I returned to my District arriving on Jan. 15, 1944. Attached herewith are the Radiograms I sent to Gen. MAC ARTHUR and Pres. QUEZON through the facilities of the 6th MD. I have not as yet received any reply. Attached also is my letter to Col. PERALTA, Jr., which is self explanatory. Col. RELUNIA gave me authority to form the skeleton of the 5th MD, and as soon as my reports regarding the formation of the 5th MD, are received, they will be forwarded with their recommendation for me to be the District Commander.

4. Major SANDICO is the most senior line officer in the Bicol Region. He has not surrendered to the Japanese and has evacuated with his family somewhere in Albay. He has not shown, however, any activity since the outbreak of the war up to the present. In spite of his being the C.O., 54th Inf. Reg't., he has not shown concern over the unification of all guerilla leaders of this region as if afraid to come out in the open, putting above all else the welfare of his family. The undersigned was left to himself to carry out the directive of the SWP. Attached hereto is the history and record of activities of my unit. On my part it is my desire to serve in any capacity the SWP extend to me irrespective of category. I do not aspire to be the leader, I only want to serve the cause, considering it my prime obligation.

5. It is requested that the SWP be requested to designate at once the District Commander of the 5th MD, in order to stop petty conflicts among guerilla leaders for leadership. I am sure that whoever is designated, District Commander, will be respected and obeyed, by all concerned, they claiming to be under Gen. MAC ARTHUR including ESCUDERO and his gang.

6. The following is the tentative organization of the District Staff, consisting of Regular and Reserve Officers whose devotion to duty and loyalty to the Cause has remained unshaken:

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT
IN THE FIELD

20 Feb. '44

SUBJECT: Organization of the 5th M.D., Report of.
TO : Major CHAS SMITH, AUS

1. Sometime last March 1943, Sgt. JESUS H. ORTIZ escorted by Sgt. GALICANO NINYO of my unit, came to contact me somewhere in Sersegen. In the letter of introduction carried by Sgt. ORTIZ, from the Commanding Officer, Col. M. PERALTA, Jr., of the 6th MD, brought the information that they are very willing to help us, if possible in matters of arms, subsistence and finance, provided we continue our activities against the common enemy. In consonance with this information and the information that the 6th MD is regularly organized and authorized by the SWPA, I sent out Lieut. ANTONIO LOMERO to accompany Sgt. ORTIZ to Pansy, bringing with him my request for attachment to that Hq., which I will be submitted to the C.O., 6th MD.

2. Lieut. LOMERO with Sgt. ORTIZ, returns to Sersegen bringing with them my authority to organize the 67th Inf. Reg't., after two months. I was designated to command the Reg't. Guerilla Leaders of Sersegen, Albay, Camarines-Sur and Camarines Norte were contacted and have shown their willingness to unify with us. When Major SANDICO, however was contacted, he refused to join us unless he be made the CO. At that time, Major SANDICO was forming an Infantry Reg't. with instructions from Col. H. STRAUHM (U.S. Army Retired) who has organized the Philippine American Irregular Troops, through his own initiative. In order to carry out successfully our unification, I relinquished my command to Major SANDICO in line with the principle of Seniority in the file of Regular Philippine Army Officers. This was done in the presence of several guerilla leaders who were then in the conference on August 29, 1943. In that conference, it was also decided that the 67th Inf. be renamed the 54th Inf. to signify that such unit exists in the 5th MD. This unification was reported to the Hq. of the 6th MD. Together with the unification papers, the history of our unit was reported including our activities since the outbreak of the war. Our Roster of Officers and Troops were also submitted. From the date we contacted we were required to submit Intelligence Reports every 15 days, which I did regularly. However, as per attached communication from the 6th MD, dated 3 Nov. '43, the attachment of the 54th Inf. Reg't was resold

Major Is. J. LARREA -----	Act'g. C.O. & G-2
Capt. L. J. LARREA -----	Act'g. Ex-O & G-4
2" Lieut. A. GUTIERREZ -----	Act'g. G-1 & Sig. Off.
2" " R. G. HONASAN -----	Act'g. G-3
2" " A. de VERA -----	Act'g. DFO
2" " D. RIEYES -----	Act'g. DJAS
2" " A. ALINDOGAN -----	Act'g. Insp. Gen.
Capt. D. J. CANUA -----	Act'g. Prev. Marshal
Capt. P. TUBIANOSA -----	Act'g. Dist. Eng. Off.

7. At present there exists an Inf. Reg't. in the Biocl Region distributed as follows:

Hq. Bn. and 1st Bn. -----	Cerbason
2nd Bn. -----	Albay
3rd Bn. -----	Camarines Sur
1 Special Inf. Bn. -----	Camarines Norte

8. Masbate province which also has an organized Inf. Bn. specially attached to the 6th MD, will be detached from the 6th MD, and attached to the 5th MD, the undersigned having been made to understand by the Hq., 6th MD, that such will be done upon the reorganization of the 6th MD.

(SGD) L. P. LAPUS (O-1300)
Major, Infantry

A TRUE COPY:

(SGD.) FEDERICO CASTILLO
2" Lieut., Inf.

A TRUE COPY:
30 June '44

Antonio V. Flores
ANTONIO V. FLORES
2nd Lt., Inf.
Bn. 5-2

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Appendix-61B

UNITED STATES FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES
 FIFTH MILITARY DISTRICT
 ILOILO FIELD

Lieut. GREGORIO ESPINAS was called for a conference by Major L. F. LAPUS, regarding his incorporation into the 54th Inf., USFIP, Bicol Provinces. Lieut. ESPINAS is at present connected with Major F. SANDICO of Albuja. Among those present in the conference were Capt. M. C. LAURENTE, JR.; 1st Lieut. ALFREDO DE VERA, JR.; 2nd Lieut. F. CASTILLO, 1st Lt., 1st Adjutant; 2nd Lieut. CEMASAL DUCAY, 1st Lt., C.O., "B" Co.; and 2nd Lieut. SERGIO PILL, C.O. The conference was called at about 10:30 a.m., 22 June 1944, somewhere in Sorsogon.

Major LAPUS: Lieut. Espinas, I have shown you all our papers, the messages we received from the SPSA, and other messages from President Quezon, and Major Smith, GSAAS. Are you willing to join us?

Lieut. ESPINAS: I am very much willing, sir. But only give me time to communicate with Major Sandico, which is but proper, before officially joining you.

Major LAPUS: I understand from you that you are a regularly-domiciled 1st Lieut. in the Reserve Force, P.A. Is this true?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir.

Major LAPUS: Have you served in Bataan?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir; with the 31st Infantry under Major-General Blumel who was our Division Commander. I was assigned with the 1-Co., 3rd Bn., of said Regiment. Our Regimental Commander was Col. Erwin.

Major LAPUS: What are your present activities in the present guerrilla since your escape from the concentration camp in Cebu?

Lieut. ESPINAS: When I escaped from the concentration camp, I proceeded to Albuja. From there, I went to my home town in Sorsogon. In Sorsogon, I remained dormant, watching the activities of the guerrilla. I was trying to contact Major Lapus, but nobody pointed me to his HQ. Last year, 1943, during the month of August, I went to Albuja, and I happened to meet one sergeant of Major Sandico, an old sergeant Colimayon, from that time, I took the initiative of attacking the Japanese truck bound for rice to tobacco, and succeeded in killing 2 Japanese soldiers, with 2 arms and ammunition, helmet and all accessories, which were taken and sent to Major Sandico through Colimayon. That was August 2nd 1943. From that time on, I was taken by Major Sandico with his unit, who was then forming his unit, P. A. I. F.

Major LAPUS: How many men do you have with you now?

Lieut. ESPINAS: I have 25 men, fully armed.

Major LAPUS: What kind of arms do you have?

Lieut. ESPINAS: I have 15-Infantry, cal. .30; 1-Springfield, caliber .30; 5-.45 caliber revolvers; 4 shotguns; 1-.38 caliber revolver; and 1-.38 caliber automatic pistol.

Major LAPUS: Do I understand from you that you have taken these arms in connection with your present activities in the present guerrilla?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir; I have taken them from our common enemy.

Major LAPUS: When you told me that you are willing to join us, are you telling that in the word of an officer in the Army?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir.

Major LAPUS: Do you mean to say that when you will be under us, you will subject yourself and your unit under you, to be ruled under the Military Rules and Regulations?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir, only fighting common enemy in defense of our common cause.

Major LAPUS: We are only fighting for the common cause, but there are other wild groups that are fighting us, which we don't know for what cause. Do you mean to say that you will not share with us in fighting the wild group if you will definitely join us?

Lieut. ESPINAS: If by that term, "wild", that is declared by our highest headquarters, as bandits or outlaws, I am ready to fight those wild groups of bandits or outlaws.

Major LAPUS: When you will definitely join us, will you submit yourself and your unit under the order of the Commanding Officer of the 54th Infantry?

Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir.

Major LAJUS: Do you know that our unit is governed by Army Rules and Regulations?
Lieut. ESPINAS: I know that, sir.
Major LAJUS: Do you have something more to say?
Lieut. ESPINAS: That is all, sir: I will communicate with Major Sandozo. Afterwards,
I will contact you or, in your absence, Capt. Lazara.
Major LAJUS: How long shall we wait for you?
Lieut. ESPINAS: Before July 15.
Major LAJUS: Suppose Major Sandozo will call you not to join us, what do you have to
say?
Lieut. ESPINAS: I will stick to Major Lajus, if Major Sandozo cannot produce recog-
nition papers like the Major here.
Major LAJUS: Do I understand from you that from today, we can count you as part of
our unit?
Lieut. ESPINAS: Yes, sir.

(There being no more matters to transact, the conference was closed at about
11:00 am.)

ATTENDED:

(Sgd) SERGIO P. B. ALBERDIZAN
Private, Inf.
Stenographer

(SIGNED) L. F. LAJUS
Major, Inf.
" LUIS J. LAZARA
Capt., 438, PA
" G. ESPINAS
1st Lt., Inf.
" FERRUCO CASTILLO
2nd Lieut., Inf.
" A. G. DE VERA
2nd Lieut., 438
" SERGIO APIL
2nd Lt., 438
" J. DUCAY
2nd Lt., Co., "B" Co.
54th Inf.

Enlisted men of Lieut. Espinas who were present:

1. Pvt. Julio Gontalan, Inf.
2. Pvt. Paulino Curiano, Inf.
3. Pvt. Mario Vicente, Inf.
4. Pvt. Jesus Samsan, Inf.
5. Sgt. Benito Penson

A TRUE COPY:
20 June '44

~~F. B. P. 00 311~~
FERRUCO CASTILLO
2nd Lt., Inf.
1st. Adjutant

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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
FIFTH MARIANA DISTRICT
EN ENO FIELD

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TRANSCRIPT OF COMMENTARY DURING THE CONVERSATION PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE TAKEN
DOWN IN STENOGRAPHIC NOTES.

- Major LAPUS: Our interest is not for ourselves alone, Espinas, you are a Filipino, and you are sacrificing like us also. But there is only one thing we want to explain to you: that you say you are a "free lancer." Remember that you are a regularly commissioned Officer in the Reserve Force. You still have that oath of allegiance. If you are independent and have no connections with the Army -
- Lieut. ESPINAS: (Interrupting) Excuse me sir, while the Major is still talking. It cannot be without connection, sir.
- Major LAPUS: Well, you say claim you are under Major Bandico. We don't want to induce you to join us, but we want to enlighten you on the matter. We have a definite mission. We don't want to be raided all the time; and your activities here bring raids most of the time.
- Lieut. ESPINAS: That raid, sir, was precisely for me. In fact, 25 MG and some Japanese from Albay were sent to bag me here. I know that Escudero is responsible for my having been raided. That fellow, Jose Batista of Escudero, was the one who revealed on us.
- Major LAPUS: Precisely, you are from here. You have come here and because of that, our work here is troubled. We better show you all the papers. (Shows and hands papers to Lieut. Espinas).
- Lieut. ESPINAS: I am always cooperating with your organization here because I still recognize myself under the command of the Major.
- Major LAPUS: You know, because of this raids, our operatives in Cam. Norte and Albay were caught. We will give you a definite sector. Once you are connected with us, we will respect you, we will protect you, we will give you procurement officers, junior officers, etc...
- Lieut. ESPINAS: It is my dream and also it has been my dream to be always with the Major. It was the fault of the EM of the Major that they failed to take us to your OPX. The only thing that troubles me is the present conflict between the Major and the Governor. Only yesterday, I received a communication from the Governor. That is, from Delgado, an officer under Escudero.
- Capt. MARSH: I will tell you about the conference we had in Irosin. When Cabrera was here, he convinced the Governor to cease hostilities for a while. I was able to arrange for a conference. We went to Irosin to see him. Fully confident that that there was no treachery behind, we left some of our men in the boundary of Irosin and Juban. Now, can you imagine that during the first evening that we were in Irosin, one of our officers was assassinated in Japan. Now, if they are in earnest to be united, they will discipline their men.
- Lieut. ESPINAS: That is why, Captain, I see the disadvantage in fighting the other guerrillas. If you only know what is happening now in Albay. That is why I have said to Major Bandico, "What do you want this or that? You will be fighting against Sabat, against the GO, against the Japs, and almost against everybody. Last week, I received a communication from Major Bandico to come immediately. I said, if my going there will be to fight against other guerrillas, let them do the fighting; but not me. If there are sufficient papers or order from Gen. Escudero or from USA that these people are bandits, I will fight them. That other day, when I came here; this Escudero invited me for a conference to Bacan. I answered, "I am grateful that the colonel invited me to a conference, but inasmuch as my unit is neutral, I will remain neutral." I will not go there, for fear that Major Lapus will get jealous; and I am afraid to see the Major for a conference for fear that the Governor will get jealous. But you see, Major, I am here now in conference with you because I consider myself a military man.
- Major LAPUS: That conference with Escudero is only a ruse. You better be careful.
- Lieut. ESPINAS: Yesterday I sent a message with answer to the effect: I have no intention

tion of attacking my people. No, we have only one aim. If they attack me, I will fight back and kill them if I can; what can I do? I don't know what is going on here. The Major also doesn't attack anyone, especially you are provoked. I learned that this organization is recognized already. Just before I left Albay, we were talking with Captain Mercado. That is the whole trouble in Albay; Supplies - - - only supplies, I said. "Capt Mercado, if that is the way Major Sandico runs this, I can't do it." Just imagine, Major Sandico even wanted me to parade in the town of Guimbatan and show to the people that we were that strong, so that Zabat will know and not molest us. I said, "Nothing doing, what is the use? We are hiding and then we parade ourselves." "I am not backbiting, sir, but that is the truth of what is happening in Albay." One more, sir, before I read this: One time Major Sandico called me and said, "Maginas, if you can get me two .22 Cal rif les with 100 rounds each, I will give you the firearms with Colinares and Bonilla. Fortunately, I was able to find me .22 cal. rifles. I want to get these rifles." You know what he said? He said, "Oh never mind those, we have no food supply." Food supply again, and he does not fight the enemy. This is the truth, sir, am I backbiting.

I am feeding my own men. Even if my family cannot eat, worried that I can feed my men who are sacrificing for me. I have my own ricefields; I give my own paddy, and resources, with the little help of the public.

So you know, sir? The main trouble between Zabat and Sandico - - - Sup. 1st The first district of Albay goes to Zabat and the second district goes to Major Sandico, because the first district has more ricefields and harvest more. When I was there, a certain Capt. under Zabat called for me and told me that I could not commandeer there, because the first district belongs to Zabat and the second district to Major Sandico. I said, "You say that I cannot get any paddy here just because this is the first district and it belongs to you? How about my own rice-fields here, can I not get any paddy? To tell you the truth, I am not commandeering here. If the civilian population gives me, that is alright. Even if you will send 500 collectors to the second district, the men of Major Sandico will molest you." Then he said that I could procure there also. When harvest time came, however, the same officer sent me word, saying, "If you insist in coming, you will get into trouble." And now he calls for a conference. I said, "No conference." I told some men of Colinares, "Stop collecting and commandeering paddy in Malinao. If you collect, that is your own lookout. I don't want to get into trouble with other people."

What now, Sir? He says that I have? Major Sandico does not have a single rifle here. That is my rifle, sir. This was my only capital when I started, sir, this .22 cal. pistol. Every rifle that I have now cost lives and I will not use them to fight against Filipinos. I do not even know of any administration in their official action.

Major Lopez: You cannot see that lack of administration here.

Lieut. ...: That is right, sir. If Major Lopez is not content with the fight with the SC and the Japs, he will have a very good organization. That was what I told them in Albay. I observed in your OP that if the procurement officer can collect 3 sacks of paddy, it goes to the Army, and it is evenly distributed. But not in Albay. I am not backbiting. This is the real truth of what happens in Albay.

(At this juncture Major Lopez formally opened the conference)

ATTN: ...

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Private, Inf.

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10 June 1964

Fidel ...

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Asst. Adjutant

312 Correspondence
44-241-~~EE~~EEA
HO ~~Inf~~ Inf to the Field
9 and MD

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