

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

THE NIMITZ MUSEUM

PRESENTS

AN ORAL HISTORY BY

TONY SIERRA

INTERVIEWER - DICK BRZEZINSKI

TAPE NUMBER 1097

THE IS DICK BRZEZINSKI. TODAY IS FEBRUARY 26, 2004, I AM INTERVIEWING STAFF SERGEANT TONY SIERRA. THIS INTERVIEW IS TAKING PLACE IN FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS. THIS INTERVIEW IS IN SUPPORT OF THE CENTER FOR PACIFIC WAR STUDIES, ARCHIVES FOR THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR, TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS SITE.

TONY, CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE YOU WERE BORN AND A LITTLE ABOUT GROWING UP?

TONY

YES, I WAS BORN IN MEXICO IN THE STATE OF CHIHUAHUA IN A LITTLE VILLAGE, CLOSE TO SANTA BARBARA, ABOUT 150 MILES SOUTH OF JUAREZ.

DICK

WHEN WAS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

TONY

I WAS BORN ON JANUARY 17, 1924. MY TWO BROTHERS AND MY MOTHER AND I WOULD CROSS THE BORDER IN EL PASO WHEN I WAS AROUND EIGHT YEARS OLD. WE MOVED TO A LITTLE MINING TOWN IN ARIZONA CALLED, MORENCI. AFTER A FEW MONTHS THERE, WE MOVED TO PHOENIX AND THAT IS WHERE I WAS RAISED, IN THE SOUTH PART OF PHOENIX.

DICK

HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE SERVICE?

TONY

ACTUALLY, I WAS DRAFTED. I WAS A SOPHOMORE IN HIGH SCHOOL. SOME HOW OR OTHER, I HAD LAGGED BEHIND AND I WAS ALREADY OLD ENOUGH TO BE DRAFTED. I WAS ONLY A SOPHOMORE IN HIGH SCHOOL. LET ME CORRECT IT; I WAS NOT DRAFTED, I WAS ON THE VERGE OF BEING DRAFTED. THERE WERE 4 OR 5 OF US GUYS SITTING AROUND THE STEPS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL AND WE STARTED TALKING ABOUT SIGNING UP FOR THE ARMY. WE ALL WENT DOWN THERE AND WE WERE ALL ACCEPTED EXCEPT ONE GUY. HE WAS A LITTLE TOO YOUNG. I SIGNED UP FOR IT BUT I WAS ON THE VERGE OF BEING DRAFTED.

DICK

HOW OLD WERE YOU THEN?

TONY

THAT WAS IN 1942.

DICK

AND THAT WOULD MAKE YOU ALMOST 18 OR 18 AT THAT TIME?

TONY

EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD.

DICK

WHERE DID YOU GOT TO BASIC?

TONY

WHEN I WENT INTO THE SERVICE, I WAS SHIPPED FROM PHOENIX WITH 10 OR 15 OTHER FELLOW; WE WENT TO FORT McARTHUR WERE WE WERE SWORN IN AND FROM THERE, WE WENT TO CAMP ROBERTS, CALIFORNIA, WHICH IS JUST OUT OF SAN LOUIS OBISPO, IN THE MIDDLE OF CALIFORNIA. I TOOK MY BASIC TRAINING THERE, INFANTRY TRAINING AT CAMP ROBERTS.

DICK

WHEN DID YOU GET INTO THE PARATROOPERS?

TONY

AFTER WE FINISHED THE BASIC TRAINING PERIOD, I CAN'T REMEMBER, IT WAS 4 OR 5 MONTHS, THEY HAD AN INTERVIEW ROOM WHERE SOME OFFICERS, CAPTAINS AND MAJORS, WERE INTERVIEWING THE FELLOWS WHO HAD FINISHED BASIC TRAINING AND ASKING WHAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN DOING. WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO? I HAD BUDDIED UP WITH ANOTHER FELLOW THERE IN THE BARRACKS WHO WAS WAY UP THERE, VERY INTELLIGENT, A FELLOW FROM UCLA AND HE SAID, "LET'S TRY TO GO INTO THE AIR FORCE AND BE PILOTS. HE WAS INTERVIEWED FIRST AND THEY ACCEPTED HIM AS A PILOT BECAUSE HE WAS HIGHLY QUALIFIED.

WHEN I WENT IN, THEY ASKED ME WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO DO. I SAID, "I WOULD LIKE TO BE A PILOT." THEY LOOKED OVER MY RECORD AND SAID, "YOU DON'T HAVE THE BACKGROUND AND ABILITY. JUST CAN'T DO IT, AND WE HAVE TO SEND YOU TO THE INFANTRY." I WENT OUT AND TALKED TO MY BUDDY McVEY AND I TOLD HIM THAT AND HE SAID, "I'M GOING WITH YOU." HE WENT IN AND TOLD THEM, "I DON'T WANT TO GO TO BE A PILOT, I WANT TO GO TO THE INFANTRY."

THE NEXT DAY, THEY HAD ANOTHER SESSION, AT THE SAME PLACE, "THEY PUT IT ON THE BULLETIN BOARD AN ORDER THAT THEY WERE SENDING SOME TO THE RECRUITING OFFICERS FROM THE PARACHUTE SCHOOL." THEN McVEY SAID, "YOU KNOW, WE ARE BETTER OFF GOING AS PARATROOPERS THAN GOING AS INFANTRY GUYS. WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GIVE IT A SHOT?" WE WENT TO THE MEETING AND I SAW THIS REALLY, REALLY SNAZZY LOOKING SERGEANTS IN THE

JUMP SUITS AND ALL OF THAT, ADORNMENT AND SHINY BOOTS. THEY GAVE US A TERRIFIC PRESENTATION. ADDITIONALLY, THEY TOLD US WE WERE GOING TO MAKE 50 DOLLARS MORE. BOTH McVEY AND I AND SEVERAL OTHER PERSONS ENDED UP IN THE 503 FROM THE SAME GROUP. THAT'S THE WAY WE WENT TO JUMP SCHOOL.

DICK

HOW LONG OF A TRAINING DID YOU HAVE IN JUMP SCHOOL?

TONY

I'M NOT ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN, BUT IT SEEMS THE TRAINING AT JUMP SCHOOL WAS FIVE WEEKS. THE MAJOR PART OF THE TRAINING WAS ACTUALLY A PHYSICAL BUILD UP TO STRENGTHEN YOUR MUSCLES AND SO FORTH. THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS, IT REALLY INVOLVED THE HANDLING OF THE PARACHUTE, THE MECHANICS AND ALL OF THAT. THE LAST WEEK WAS THE ACTUAL JUMP. YOU MADE FIVE JUMPS TO QUALIFY. THAT WAS THE LAST WEEK.

DICK

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR JUMP SCHOOL?

TONY

IT WAS AT FORT BENNING, GA. IN THOSE DAYS, IT WAS THE ONLY PLACE. NOW, THEY HAVE 2 OR 3. IN THOSE DAYS ALL THE OLD PARATROOPERS THAT WENT TO EUROPE AND NORMANDY AND WERE IN BASTOGNE, THEY ALL WENT TO FORT BENNING. THAT WAS THE ONLY PLACE. THAT WAS THE END OF PARACHUTE TRAINING. WHEN WE FINISHED JUMP SCHOOL, THEY PUT US ON THE TRAIN AND SHIPPED US OVERNIGHT TO CAMP IN VIRGINIA, CAMP PATRICK HENRY FOR PREPARING US TO GO TO EUROPE BECAUSE THEY WERE BUILDING AN AIRBORNE DIVISION OVER THERE IN ENGLAND.

WEFORMED IN RANKS THE FIRST OR SECOND MORNING WE WERE THERE. IT WAS RAINING LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS. THEY LINED US UP IN RANKS AND EACH ONE OF US HAD AN ENVELOPE WITH OUR OWN DOCUMENTS. SOME GUY CAME DOWN THE LINE AND SAID, "EVERYBODY FROM HERE TO THERE, GO RIGHT . THESE GUYS WENT TO EUROPE AND WE WENT TO THE PACIFIC. THAT'S HOW WE ENDED UP IN THE 503 PARACHUTE REGIMENT.

THEY SHIPPED US FROM THERE BY TRAIN. WE ENDED UP AT CAMP STONEMAN IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY ON ANGEL ISLAND WHERE WE WERE FURTHER PROCESSED AND GIVEN THE NECESSARY INJECTIONS PREPARING TO GO OVERSEAS. NONE OF US KNEW WE WERE GOING TO THE 503. I HAD NEVER HEARD OF THE 503 UNTIL WE GOT ON THE SHIP AND THEN THEY LET THE WORD OUT THAT WE WERE GOING. THE REGIMENT WAS STATIONED IN AUSTRALIA.

DICK

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF YOUR OVERALL TRAINING BEFORE YOUR ASSIGNMENT TO THE

503?

TONY

MY OWN FEELING WAS THAT WE DIDN'T GET ENOUGH TRAINING TO DO THE WORK. EVERYTHING WAS TOO FAST BECAUSE OBVIOUSLY THEY WERE PREPARING AS I SAID BEFORE, TO FORM THE DIVISION THERE IN EUROPE AND THEY WERE GETTING US OUT AS FAST AS THEY COULD. I REALLY DIDN'T THINK BUT WE WERE THAT WELL TRAINED. WE WERE TRAINED IN THE BASICS OF INFANTRY WEAPONS AND TACTICS AND JUMPING OUT WITH PARACHUTES. BASICALLY THAT IS THE TRAINING WE HAD. WE WERE TOUGH. BY THE TIME WE GOT OUT OF THE JUMP SCHOOL, WE COULD WALK MANY MILES WITH HEAVY LOADS.

AT ANY RATE, WE ENDED UP IN AUSTRALIA. OUR SHIP THAT USED TO BE A CRUISE SHIP, THE *LURLINE*. CONVERTED INTO A TROOP SHIP. THEY HAD MANY, MANY DIFFERENT UNITS. THE GROUP THAT I BELONGED TO HAD ABOUT 250 PARATROOPERS, WE SAILED OUT OF CAMP STONEMAN IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY AND ENDED UP IN BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA.

DICK

AND ABOUT WHAT TIME WAS THAT?

TONY

I CAN'T REMEMBER EXACTLY, BUT IT WAS EARLY IN 1943. WHAT HAD HAPPENED WAS THE REGIMENT HAD BEEN STATIONED IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA. A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THIS BUT, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD EVACUATED THE NORTHER HALF OF AUSTRALIA, MAINLY THE TERRITORY OF QUEENSLAND BECAUSE THE JAPANESE WERE VERY, VERY CLOSE AND THEY WERE EXPECTING TO BE INVADED AT ANY TIME. THEY HAD EVACUATED EVERYBODY FROM THAT PART OF AUSTRALIA EXCEPT THE CRITICAL OFFICERS AND THE CRITICAL PEOPLE WHO WERE NEEDED IN EACH LITTLE TOWN. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAD STATIONED A FEW TROOPS IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA IN LITTLE TOWNS OUT THERE. I SUSPECT THEY HAD BEEN THERE TO MEET THE ADVANCE OF THE JAPANESE.

AT ANY RATE, WHATEVER HAPPENED WITH OUR TRAVEL, DELAYED US FOR SEVERAL DAYS BECAUSE WE WERE MEANT TO JOIN THE 503 WHEN THEY MADE THE FIRST JUMP IN NEW GUINEA AND WE MISSED IT BY A FEW DAYS BECAUSE WHEN WE LANDED, AT THE BASE CAMP, THEY WERE ON THE JUMP, OR ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE JUMP. WE MISSED THAT JUMP AND WE JOINED THE REGIMENT AT GARDEN VALE. THEN, THEY LEFT PART OF THE REGIMENT IN NEW GUINEA AFTER THEY HAD JUMPED. THEY SENT US UP AS REPLACEMENTS TO PORT MORESBY TO JOIN THE REGIMENT. THAT'S WHEN I JOINED D COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION.

DICK

DID YOU HAVE GOOD ACCOMODATIONS THERE, FOOD DRYUNIFORM, ETC?

TONY

THE ACCOMODATIONS WERE GOOD UP UNTIL WE LEFT AUSTRALIA BUT WHEN WE LEFT AUSTRALIA, AND ACTUALLY JOINED THE 503, FOR EXAMPLE IT WAS RAINING LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS AND THE 503 WERE DRENCHED THE RAIN WAS DRIPPING INSIDE THE TENT. I WAS ASSIGNED TO ONE OF THE TENTS WITH OTHER PARATROOPERS. I WAS SOAKING WET WHEN I REPORTED FOR DUTY. I REMEMBER THEY HAD NO LAMPS, THE SQUAD SERGEANT HAD LITTLE CANDLES. WE HAD THE EMPTY AMMUNITION BOXES AND THEY SET THE CANDLES THERE AND DID THE WRITING. THEY HAD ABOUT FOUR CANDLES IN THE TENT. IT WAS DARK EVEN THOUGH IT WAS DAYLIGHT, IT WAS RAINING SO MUCH, IT WAS DARK. THESE GUYS WERE LYING ON THE CANVAS COTS. THEY WERE EXHAUSTED. THEY HAD JUST GOTTEN BACK FROM THE JUMP. I CAME INTO THE SQUAD AND THAT WAS MY BEGINNING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE 503.

DICK

YOUR BUDDY, McVEY FROM UCLA?

TONY

MY BUDDY, MAC, ALSO WENT TO THE 503 BUT, MAC ENDED UP IN E COMPANY, OUR SISTER COMPANY. I WAS IN D COMPANY. AFTER A FEW MONTHS, MAC DISAPPEARED. HE LEFT THE REGIMENT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM. I LOST HIM. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER HE WENT SOMEPLACE HIGHER OR WHAT HAPPENED. AFTER WE HAD BEEN TOGETHER, HE LEFT AND I NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN.

DICK

FROM THERE THEN, WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST COMBAT OR FIRST JUMP?

TONY

I WAS A RIFLEMAN AND IN THOSE DAYS, IN THE COMPANYS, THE PLATOONS WERE ARMED WITH A 30 CALIBER AIR COOLED MACHINE GUN, WITH THE TRIPOD AND ALL OF THAT. EACH SQUAD HAD ONE OF THOSE. I, BEING THE LOWEST GUY, I WAS MADE THE AMMUNITION CARRIER BY THE MACHINE GUN GROUP. TWO OTHER GUYS AND MYSELF WERE THE AMMO CARRIERS.

THEN WE WENT UP TO HOLLANDIA. WE SAILED. WE MADE SEVERAL STOPS ALONG THE WAY IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF NEW GUINEA, BUNA AND ORO BAY AND ALL OF THAT BUT, THERE WAS NO COMBAT, WE JUST STOPPED FOR RESUPPLY OR WHATEVER IT WAS. WE SAILED FROM THERE TO HOLLANDIA, WHICH IS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF NEW GUINEA. WE MADE AN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING. WE DIDN'T JUMP THERE AT HOLLANDIA. THAT IS WHERE GEN. MACARTHUR HAD MOVED HIS HEADQUARTERS. FROM BRISBANE TO HOLLANDIA. WE INVADDED THE PLACE. THAT WAS NOT

MUCH. THE 503 DID NOT HAVE COMBAT THERE BECAUSE THE JAPANESE TOOK OFF AND ABANDONED THE PLACE. NEVERTHELESS, WE CHASED THEM UP THE RAVINES BUT WE NEVER DID FIND THEM. HOLLANDIA ENDED UP BEING THE BIG, BIG HEADQUARTERS FOR THE PACIFIC THEATER AS FAR AS MACARTHUR'S GROUP WAS CONCERNED.

WE STAYED THERE IN HOLLANDIA PATROLLING AND FURNISHING SECURITY FOR THE HEADQUARTERS. THEN, I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW MANY WEEKS LATER, BUT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, THE REGIMENT WAS AGAIN ALERTED TO MAKE A JUMP ON THE ISLAND NEOMFOOR, WHICH IS AN ISLAND IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF NEW GUINEA.

ONE OF THE DIVISIONS THAT INVADED A BIGGER ISLAND CALLED BIAK WERE NOTICING THAT NO MATTER HOW MANY JAPS THEY KILLED AND WHAT THEY DESTROYED, THEY WERE BEING RESUPPLIED AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW FROM WHERE. FINALLY, THEY FOUND OUT THAT A PART OF NEOMFOOR HAD A GREAT BIG JAPANESE BASE; A COUPLE OF AIRSTRIPS AND ALL OF THAT, WHICH THEY HADN'T COUNTED ON BEFORE.

THEY ALERTED THE REGIMENT TO JUMP THERE AND CAPTURE THAT ISLAND. WE WENT AHEAD AND JUMPED THE 1ST AND THE 3RD BATTALIONS BUT THE ONLY PLACE TO JUMP WAS THE AIRSTRIPS AMONG THE JUNGLE. THERE WERE SO MANY GUYS THAT WERE HURT BECAUSE THEY LANDED ON THE HARD TOP. THEY CALLED OFF THE JUMP OF THE 2ND BATTALION. WE HAD TWO BATTALIONS ON THE GROUND. THEY PUT MY BATTALION ON THE SHIP AND LANDED US ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND, AN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING. THAT WAS THE FIRST REAL TOUGH COMBAT THAT THE REGIMENT HAD BECAUSE THERE WERE SO MANY JAPANESE ON NEOMFOR. THEY WERE WELL SUPPLIED AND IT WAS A VERY DIFFICULT CAMPAIGN.

IN MY WAY OF THINKING, IT WAS THE FIRST INITIAL HARD BATTLE. WE HAD ONE OF THE BOYS IN MY COMPANY, RAY EUBANKS, WHO WON THE MEDAL OF HONOR THERE ON NEOMFOOR.

DICK

HOW MANY JAPANESE DID THEY ESTIMATE THERE WERE?

TONY

THEY DID, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW BUT, THEY WERE IN THE SOUTH, HERE WE LEARNED SOME OF THE TACTICS THAT THEY WERE GOING TO USE, FROM HERE ON WHEN THEY SAW US COMING THEY WOULD HEAD FOR THE HILLS. THEY HAD PREPARED POSITIONS ALREADY. THAT WAS THE DIFFICULT PART BECAUSE WE NOT ONLY HAD THE JUNGLE TO FIGHT BUT THE JAPANESE HAD PREPARED BUNKERS AND ALL OF THAT. THEY HAD PREPARED FOR MONTHS AND MONTHS. WE FOUND THAT TO BE TRUE THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE PACIFIC. THE PROBLEM WAS NOT LANDINGS, THE PROBLEM WAS CHASING THEM UP THE HILLS. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED THERE.

DICK

HOW DID YOU FEEL IN YOUR FIRST COMBAT?

TONY

I WAS SHOCKED AND REALLY, REALLY SCARED. I WAS JUST A KID YOU KNOW. I REMEMBER FOR EXAMPLE, I DON'T THINK IT WAS A FIRE FIGHT WHERE EUBANKS WON THE MEDAL, BUT IT WAS ONE OF THOSE FIRE FIGHTS. WE WERE STRUNG OUT ON THE TRAIL, THE PLATOON, AND MY SQUAD WAS THE LEAD SQUAD. WE ALL HIT THE GROUND WHEN THE FIRE BROKE OUT. I REMEMBER MY SQUAD SERGEANT YELLED AT ME AND TWO OTHER GUYS TO HEAD AROUND THE RIGHT. I FROZE AND HE KEPT YELLING. I COULDN'T MOVE. I WAS SO SCARED THAT I JUST STAYED ON THE GROUND. WE GOT OVER THAT FIRE FIGHT AND I WAS REALLY ASHAMED. I TOLD HIM, " YOU KNOW SERGEANT, I JUST COULDN'T MOVE." HE SAID, "DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT IT HAPPENS TO US ALL". THAT WAS THE ONLY TIME THAT I EVER FAILED.

DICK

WERE THESE 30 CALIBER AIR COOLED MACHINE GUNS THAT YOU HAD WITH YOU?

TONY

IT WAS PRESCRIBED THERE WAS ONE WITH EVERY PLATOON. LATER ON IT CHANGED THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMPANY AND THEY TOOK AWAY THESE MACHINE GUNS AND GAVE US B A R's. I THINK IT WAS BECAUSE IT WAS TOO DIFFICULT TO CARRY THOSE 30 CALIBER GUNS. THEY BROKE UP INTO TWO PIECES BUT IT WAS STILL DIFFICULT TO SET UP. THEY CHANGED OVER TO THE B A R AND IT WASN'T REALLY THAT BAD. THEY FORMED THREE RIFLE SQUADS AND EACH SQUAD HAD A B A R . THEN THEY FORMED ONE PLATOON WITH THREE SQUADS AND EACH SQUAD HAD TWO 60mm MORTARS. THEY MOVED THE MORTARS OUT OF THE RIFLE SQUAD. INTO THEIR OWN PLATOON, SO THEY REORGANIZED ALL OF THAT. I BELIEVE THAT HAPPENED BEFORE NEOMFOOR. I'M NOT FOR SURE.

DICK

WHAT SORT OF AMMO DID THE B A R REQUIRE?

TONY

THE SAME. THE B A R AND THE M-I HAD THE SAME. THAT WAS THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING THEM. OF COURSE, THE 30 CALIBER B A R COOLED OFF FAST. THE ONLY AMMUNITION WE HAD OF DIFFERENT SIZES WAS THE .45 PISTOLS AND ALSO SOME OF THE TOMMY GUNS AND THAT WAS THE SAME AMMUNITION AS THE .45. THE OFFICERS HAD THOSE FOLDING CARBINES. THEY HAD A SMALLER CALIBER THAN THE 30 CAL. THOSE WERE THE AMMUNITONS WE HAD.

DICK

DID THE B A R HAVE A CLIP?

TONY

THE B A R , YEAH. I BELIEVE IT HAD ABOUT 40 ROUNDS. IN EACH CLIP ABOUT THE SIZE OF THIS BOOK. I WAS THE AMMUNITION CARRIER. THE AMMUNITION CARRRIER CARRIED TWO OF THOSE BOXES WITH A BAND AND THEY WENT ON EACH SIDE. OF THE BODY. THE ASSISTANT GUNNER WOULD ALSO CARRY TWO AMMUNITIONCLIPS AND THE GUNNER CARRIED THE B A R WITH CLIPS IN IT.

DICK

I KNOW WHAT THE AMMUNITION CARRIER'S JOB IS NOW BUT WHAT IS THE ASSISSTANT GUNNER'S JOB.

TONY

THE ASSISTANT GUNNER IS THERE IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO THE GUNNER. I RECALL THAT WHEN WE HAD THE 30 CALIBER MACHINE GUN, THE ASSISTANT GUNNER CARRIED THE BARREL AND RECIEVER AND THE GUNNER CARRIED THE TRIPOD, BECAUSE THAT GUNNER WOULD MOUNT THE TRIPOD WHERE HE THOUGHT WAS THE PROPER PLACE AND THEN THE ASSISTANT GUNNER WOULD STICK THAT BARREL ON TOP OF THE TRIPOD. I COULD SEE THAT WHEN WE HAD THE B A R , THE ASSISTANT GUNNER ACTUALLY HAD NO DUTIES EXCEPT BE THERE IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THE OTHER GUY.

DICK

SO HE WAS ANOTHER AMMO CARRIER. HE BACKED UP THE B A R GUNNER.

TONY

THAT'S TRUE.

DICK

WHAT WAS YOUR NEXT COMBAT?

TONY

FROM THERE, WE WENT BACK TO HOLLANDIA WHERE WE HAD BEEN. ACTUALLY HOLLANDIA WAS OUR BASE CAMP. . WE WERE THERE FOR QUIET A WHILE. ACTUALLY, IT GOT A LITTLE BIT BORING BECAUSE THERE WAS REALLY NOTHING TO DO. WE JUST KEPT REPEATING THE

TRAINING OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

THEN, ALL AT ONCE, THEY PUT US ON ELEVEN OF THOSE BIG BARGES AND SAILED UP TO THE PHILLIPINE ISLANDS. WE WERE NOT IN ON THE INITIAL LANDING OF LEYTE, BUT WE WENT IN ON ABOUT THE 2ND OR 3RD WEEK.

DICK

IN THE PHILLIPINES?

TONY

YES, ON LEYTE. THAT'S THE ISLAND WHERE YOU HAVE SEEN A PICTURE WHEN DOUGLAS MACARTHUR IS WALKING THERE. WE WERE ON THAT BEACH WHEN HE WALKED. WE WERE NOT IN THE INITIAL WAVE THERE. I SUSPECT THAT THE 503 WENT THERE AS KIND OF RESERVE AND THEN ALSO TO JUMP FROM THERE TO OTHER PLACES. WHAT HAPPENED IS LEYTE WAS SO RAINY, SO DAMP AND SO WET THAT THE GROUND WAS NOT TOO MASHY THE ENGINEERS COULDN'T BUILD AN AIR STRIP.

THE 503 WAS THERE ON LEYTE. WE STAYED ON THE BEACH THERE DURING THE BATTLE . OF LEYTE GULF THE 503 WAS ON THE BEACH UNDER THE COCONUT PALMS WHEN THE JAPANESE WERE CHEWING OUR TAIL TOWARD THE BEACH. WE WERE RIGHT UNDER THE COCONUT PALMS. IT WAS A VERY SCARY DEAL BECAUSE THE SHELL WOULD EXPLODE ON TOP OF THE PALMS AND THE SHRAPNEL WAS SPREADING DOWN. IT WAS VERY, VERY SCARY. WE WERE THERE. IT WAS IN DECEMBER, 1944. WE STAYED ON LEYTE THROUGH THE BATTLE. WE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH ACTION THERE. WE WERE MORE OR LESS IN RESERVE. WE WERE WAITING FOR THE ENGINEERS TO BUILD THE AIRSTRIP. THEY NEVER DID.

FROM THERE, THEY PUT US ON ANOTHER SHIP AND TOOK US TO THE ISLAND OF MINDORO, WHICH IS JUST SOUTHWEST OF LEYTE BECAUSE THERE WAS ALREADY AN AIRSTRIP ON MINDORO. THEY FIGURED THEY NEEDED AN AIRSTRIP FOR THE 503, SO WHY NOT USE MINDORO AS LONG AS THEY COULDN'T USE LEYTE. THAT'S WHAT I THINK HAPPENED. WE WENT FOR MINDORO AND THERE WE MADE ANOTHER AMPHIBIOUS LANDING.

WE CAPTURED MINDORO, THE WHOLE ISLAND IN THE MATTER OF A WEEK OR SO. WE CAPTURED THE AIRSTRIP INTACT. WE HAD OUR OWN AIRSTRIP THEN, WHICH IS THE AIRSTRIP WE TOOK OFF FROM FOR THE RAID ON CORREGIDOR. THAT WAS VERY CLOSE AND A VERY SHORT JUMP. THE ENVIRONMENT WAS BETTER ON MINDORO BECAUSE IT WASN'T QUIET AS DAMP AND THE WEATHER WAS PLEASINGLY NICE. I REALLY THINK THEY SHOULD HAVE SENT THE 503 TO MINDORO IN THE FIRST PLACE AND AVOIDED EVERYTHING ELSE. AT THIS POINT, I WAS STILL A PFC.

FROM MINDORO, WE WERE THERE ABOUT A COUPLE OF MONTHS. THEY ALERTED US FOR ANOTHER JUMP. WE ALL REPORTED TO THE AIRSTRIP. THEY CLAIM NOW THERE WAS A DISCUSSION

HERE AMONG THE GUYS WHO WERE THERE. THEY ISSUED PARACHUTES, WE WERE GOING TO JUMP BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE. WE WENT DOWN TO THE AIRSTRIP AND THEY SENT ONE OF THE BATTALION, THE 3RD BATTALION FIRST THEN THE 2ND BATTALION AND THE FIRST BATTALION THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

THEY PUTUS IN THE PLANE AND TOOK OFF AND INSTEAD OF JUMPING, THEY LANDED ON THE ISLAND OF CEBU. WE WERE READY TO JUMP BUT DIDN'T JUMP. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHY. WE LANDED ON THE ISLAND OF CEBU AND LEFT OUR CHUTES ON THE PLANE AND TOOK ANOTHER BARGE AND MADE AN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING ON THE ISLAND OF NEGROS.

I LOST MY SEQUENCE HERE. I FORGOT ABOUT CORREGIDOR.

DICK

I GUESS WE WERE TALKING ABOUT YOUR MOVE OVER TO MINDORO AND PREPARED FOR THE JUMP ON CORREGIDOR.

TONY

THAT'S CORRECT. NOW, THE WHOLE REGIMENT MOVED OVER TO THE AIRSTRIP AND THE 3RD BATTALION TOOK OFF EARLY IN THE MORNING, AROUND SIX O'CLOCK. WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH PLANES TO JUMP THE WHOLE REGIMENT AT ONE TIME. WE JUMPED BY BATTALIONS. THEY TOOK THE 3RD BATTALION FIRST AND THEY WENT AHEAD AND MADE THE JUMP ON THE UP SIDE OF THE TWO LANDING FIELDS, A GOLF COURSE AND THE OLD PARADE GROUNDS. THEN, AFTER THE PLANES DROPPED THE 3RD BATTALION, THEY CAME BACK TO MINDORO AND I RECALL WE WERE SITTING ON THE TARMAC WATCHING THE PLANES COMING BACK AND THEY CAME BACK, FUELED THEM UP AGAIN AND TOOK MY 2ND BATTALION.

DICK

HOW MANY PEOPLE IN A BATTALION?

TONY

THERE WERE ROUGHLY ABOUT 800..

DICK

AND HOW MANY JUMPED AT CORREGIDOR?

TONY

WE JUMPED TWO BATTALIONS.

DICK

ROUGHLY AROUND 1,600?

TONY

ROUGHLY AROUND 1,600. , THE 3RD BATTALION HAD THE BEST JUMP OF ALL BECAUSE THEY WERE A SURPRISE. THEY HAD A FREE REIN. BY THE TIME THE 2ND BATTALION GOT THERE, THE JAPS WERE ALERTED AND THEY WERE READY. WHEN WE JUMPED, WE EVEN HAD A WORSE TIME THAN THE 1ST AND THE 3RD BATALIONS. AT ANY RATE, WHEN WE JUMPED THE PARADE GROUND AND THE GOLF COURSE WAS BEING HOSED DOWN WITH MACHINE GUNS AND A LOT OF THE BOYS WERE HAVING A BAD TIME.

DICK

YOU JUMPED UNDER FIRE?

TONY

YES. THEY WERE HOSING DOWN THE JUMP FIELDS. THE 2ND BATTALION HAD AN ESTIMATED 25% CASUALTY, THE BATTERY WHEELER, ONE OF THE BIG BATTERY S THERE WAS OUR MEETING PLACE AND THEY KEPT TELLING US FOR SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE TO REMEMBER "WHEN YOU LAND, YOU HEAD FOR WHEELER BATTERY." THEY HAD A SAND TABLE OF THE ISLAND AND SAID, "THIS IS WHERE YOU GO." HIGH WHEELER BATTERY BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO MAKE SURE EVERYBODY KNEW IT. WHEN YOU LAND, YOU DON'T CHANGE ANYTHING . NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, YOU GO TO WHEELER BATTERY. F COMPANY, E COMPANY AND D COMPANY.

I LANDED ON THE GOLF COURSE IN A GREAT BIG CRATER. WHEN I LANDED, THE RIFLE END HIT ME IN THE HEAD AND KNOCKED MY TEETH OUT. IT PUT ME OUT; IN THE HOLE MY PARACHUTE WAS WAVING IN THE WIND. I UNDERSATAND WE HAD A 27 KNOT WIND. GUYS WERE HAVING TO AIM OVER HERE TO LAND OVER THERE. THEY REDUCED THE HEIGHTH OF THE JUMP TO 400 FEET WHEN THE 2ND BATTALION GOT THERE BECAUSE THEY SAW THE WIND KEPT INCREASING.

THE COLONEL AND THE AIR FORCE COLONEL WERE FLYING WAY UP HIGH IN A B-24 WHILE ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING. ACCORDING TO OUR GENERAL JONES WHO TOLD ME THIS HIMSELF HE KEPT TELLING THE PILOTS TO GO LOWER BECAUSE THERE WERE TOO MANY GUYS WERE GOING OVER THE CLIFF. THEY KEPT GOING LOWER AND LOWER UNTIL THEY GOT TO 400 FEET. YOU CAN'T GO ANY LOWER THAN THAT, THE CHUTES WON'T OPEN.

HE HAD THE JUMP MASTERS CUT THE COUNT, BEFORE STARTING THE JUMP INSTEAD OF COUNTING TO SEVEN HAVE THE BOYS START THE JUMP AT FOUR IN THE COUNT, THEY WERE WATCHING WHERE THE CHUTES WERE GOING. BY THE TIME I JUMPED THEY HAD THE JUMP FIELD PRETTY WELL HOSED. THE WIND WAS BLOWING LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS. WHEN I FELL IN A HOLE THERE I DESPERATELY WORKED OUT OF MY CHUTE. MY CHUTE WAS SNAGGED ON A PIECE OF

CONCRETE. I WAS SCARED. AND I THOUGHT I HAD BEEN SHOT. I WAS DONE. FORTUNATELY A GUY FELL IN THE SAME HOLE I DID. HE WAS RUNNING AND HE FELL INTO THE HOLE. IT WAS NOT A GUY FROM MY COMPANY. HE WAS FROM F OR E COMPANY. HE LOOKED AT ME AND HE SAID, "MY GOD. WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED TO YOU?" I SAID, "I DON'T KNOW, I'M SHOT." HE PULLED OUT HIS JUMP KNIFE AND CUT MY PARACHUTE LOOSE. HE LOOKED AT MY MOUTH AND SAID, "NO, YOU AREN'T SHOT. YOU LOST THREE TEETH. I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU." HE TOOK OUT HIS FIRST AID KIT AND GOT A WAD OF BANDAGE AND PUT IT IN MY MOUTH AND SAID, "JUST BITE DOWN ON THIS. I'M LEAVING." I ASKED, "WHERE ARE YOU GOING?" HE SAID, "I'M HEADING FOR WHEELER BATTERY." I WAS STUNNED. I SAID, "WAIT FOR ME. I'M GOING THERE TOO." HE TOOK OFF RUNNING.

I COULDN'T RUN. I WALKED ACROSS. I WAS SO STUNNED I COULDN'T RUN. I WAS LOADED DOWN WITH ALL MY EQUIPMENT AND I JUST WALKED ACROSS THAT FIELD AND HAD TO CROSS A RAVINE. I DON'T KNOW HOW IN THE HELL I DID IT AND WASN'T HIT. EVERYBODY ELSE WAS RUNNING BUT I COULDN'T RUN. I WAS JUST WALKING, LOADED DOWN, ACROSS THE FIELD TO WHEELER BATTERY. WHEN I GOT THERE, A GUY WAS SAYING E COMPANY OVER HERE AND D COMPANY OVER THERE.. WHEN HE SAID D COMPANY, THE FIRST GUY I SEE IS MY 1ST SERGEANT. HE SAID, "WHERE IN THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN." THERE IS YOUR SQUAD OVER THERE. THAT WAS OUR LANDING ON CORREGIDOR. WE HAD A HORRIBLE 4 OR 5 DAYS THERE BEFORE THE BATALLION WAS TO TAKE WHEELER BATTERY.

WHEELER BATTERY IS A STRUCTURE ABOUT TWO STORIES HIGH OF SOLID CONCRETE WITH GREAT BIG GUNS, ARTILLERY GUNS. THE JAPS WERE INSIDE. IT HAD A HIGH PARAPET ON ALL SIDES THIS. THE FIRST COMPANY TRIED TO MOUNT WAS F COMPANY. BILL CALHOUN'S COMPANY. THEY GOT UP ABOUT HALF WAY AND COULDN'T MAKE IT. A FEW GUYS CAME BACK FROM HALF WAY UP THE PARAPET.

THEN OUR MORTAR PLATOON LAID SOME MORTAR FIRE ON THERE. WE HAD SOME MORTARS BEHIND US. THEY LAID ALL THE MORTAR FIRE THEY COULD INSIDE THE BATTERY. WHEN THAT WAS CLEARED, THEN THEY ORDERED E COMPANY TO TRY. E COMPANY TRIED AND THEY GOT CLEAR TO THE TOP. THEY MADE IT. WE WERE THERE GIVING THEM COVERING FIRE. WHEN I SAW THEM UP THERE, I SAW A GUY FROM E COMPANY ON TOP I KNEW WE GOT IT MADE. THEY DID TELL US THAT ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT THINGS ON THAT ISLAND WOULD BE TO TAKE THE BATTERY. THAT'S WHERE THE JAPS WERE. YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE BATTERY.

THEN, E COMPANY GOT UP THERE AND THE RESCUE WAS BEGINNING TO START BY THEN. THEY PASSED THE ORDER AROUND THAT EVERYBODY SHOULD TAKE COVER WHERE EVER THEY WERE. DON'T MOVE. STAY THERE. E COMPANY HAD ALREADY TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THAT. WE STARTED TO DOZE OFF. THE JAPS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY HAD. THEY HAD BLOWN UP SOMETHING IN DESPERATION TO DRIVE THE COMPANY OFF. IT WAS A SUICDE ATTACK. THEY GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF GUYS FROM E COMPANY AND THEY WERE FORCED TO ROLL BACK. WE LOST THE BATTERY. EVERYBODY STAYED THERE ALL NIGHT LONG. THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD DO. I

KNEW THAT IN THE MORNING D COMPANY WAS GOING TO GO. WE WERE READY. NO ONE SLEPT THAT NIGHT WAITING, AND WAITING FOR OUR TURN.

IN THE MORNING, THEY LAID SOME MORE MORTAR FIRE ON THE BATTERY. IT SEEMS IT LASTED AN HOUR, THEN WE WAITED AND WAITED, FINALLY, THEY GAVE US THE ORDER TO GO AHEAD ON AN ASSAULT BY D COMPANY. WE ASSAULTED THE BATTERY.

WE GOT TO THE TOP AND NOT A MAN WAS LOST. THE ONLY FIRING THAT WAS HAPPENING WAS THE FIRE THAT WE WERE DOING. WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE HELL THE JAPS. WE GOT UP TO THE TOP OF THE BATTERY AND THEN WE STARTED CLEANING OUT THE BURNING MASSES OF CAVES AND ALL OF THAT WITH HAND GRENADES. WE KILLED A LOT OF JAPS. WE SUSPECT THAT DURING THE NIGHT AFTER E COMPANY WAS DRIVEN BACK, A LOT OF THEM GOT OUT OF THE BATTERY AND TOOK OFF SOMEWHERE. THERE WERE NOT THAT MANY JAPS LEFT THERE AFTER THEY HAD DRIVEN F COMPANY AND E COMPANY OFF. WE THINK THEY TOOK OFF AFTER AN AIR RAID. D COMPANY WAS TO STAY ON TOP OF THE BATTERY. WE DIDN'T LOSE A MAN.

THEN, THEY GAVE D COMPANY THE JOB OF GOING TO THE SOUTHWEST SIDE OF CORREGIDOR, GOING TO THIS CORNER HERE. THERE IS A RAVINE HERE CALLED CHENEY TRAIL THIS WAS THE TERRITORY GIVEN TO D COMPANY SO WE CLEANED OUT A BUNCH OF CAVES RIGHT IN THERE. THERE WERE 3 OR 4 JAPS KILLED IN HERE. WE WENT UP TO THIS CORNER AND THEN OVER HERE, IT GOT DARK ON US SO WE FORMED A PERIMETER. WE FORMED A PERIMETER RIGHT HERE WITH D COMPANY IN THE RAVINE GOING DOWN TO THE BEACH HERE. D COMPANY COMMAND WAS HERE, IN THE ROOM HERE SIGHTING FOR THE ARTILLERY AS IN EARLY YEARS.. THE COMPANY COMMANDER MADE HIS HEADQUARTERS HERE. ALL THE PERSONNEL FROM THE COMPANY WERE DISPERSED IN THE CONCRETE SITE AND THE REST OF THE COMPANY FORMED THE PERIMETER AROUND LIKE THIS.

EVERYTHING WAS FINE. WE THOUGHT WE WOULD HAVE A QUIET NIGHT BUT ALL AT ONCE, IT MUST HAVE BEEN MIDNIGHT, ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE DOWN AT THE BEACH. THE JAPANESE HAD A WAY OF YELLING. WE DON'T KNOW IF THEY WERE DRUNK OR DRUGGED UP. IT WAS ALMOST LIKE AN INDIAN DANCE. THEY STARTED COMING UP THIS RAVINE. WE ESTIMATED IT MUST HAVE BEEN ABOUT 400 OF THEM COMING UP. FORTUNATELY, MY PLATOON WAS BESIDE THE TRAIL THEY CAME UP THIS TRAIL, SO, THEY MISSED US. THEY HEADED FOR COMPANY HEADQUARTERS AND THEY THREW HAND GRENADES INTO THE SLOTS AND KILLED EVERYBODY IN THE COMMAND POST. THEY KEPT GOING AND THEY KILLED MOST ALL OF THE SECOND PLATOON AND ABOUT HALF OF THE MORTAR PLATOON. THE THIRD PLATOON SUFFERED THE LEAST CASUALTIES BECAUSE WE WERE ASIDE FROM THE TRAIL.

THAT WAS THE BIGGEST BATTLE OF OUR STAY ON THE ISLAND. IN THE MORNING WHEN WE GOT OUT, WE COULDN'T WALK IN THE CLEAR; TOO MANY JAPS LAYING ON THE GROUND. THEY WERE JUST A CARPET OF THEM THERE.

DICK

WHO SHOT THE MOST?

TONY

WE SHOT. WE COULDN'T SEE EXCEPT SHADOWS GOING BY. ONE OF THE GUYS IN MY HOLE WAS ASSISTANT SQUAD LEADER. HE'S STILL AROUND. HE WOULD SHOOT AND TELL US TO JUST KEEP SHOOTING. THEY ARE COMING BY. HAND GRENADES AND ALL OF THAT. AFTER A TIME, HE SAID, "YOU BETTER SAVE YOUR AMMUNITION. MAYBE YOU ARE GOING TO NEED IT. SAVE YOUR AMMUNITION UNTIL YOU CAN SEE THEM." SO, WE QUIT.

THE OTHER PLATOONS CONTINUED SHOOTING BECAUSE THEY WERE HEADED RIGHT FOR THEM. THE SECOND PLATOON AND THE FIRST PLATOON, AND THE MORTAR PLATOON KILLED MOST OF THOSE JAPS. IN THE MORNING, WE GOT OUT AND LOOKED AROUND, AS I SAID BEFORE, THE AREA WAS CARPETED WITH MEN. THE BATTALION SURGEON CAME RUNNING DOWN THE HILL FROM THE TOPSIDE BECAUSE EVERYBODY HEARD ALL THE SHOOTING AT NIGHT. HE CAME DOWN AND HE WAS SHOCKED WHEN HE SAW HOW MANY JAPS WERE THERE. HE CALLED EVERYBODY IN THE BATTALION AID STATION TO COME DOWN AND THEY TOOK CARE OF OUR OWN WOUNDED. THERE WAS A MASSIVE NUMBER OF DEAD THERE. THOSE THAT WERE LEFT WERE GIVEN THE JOB OF THROWING THEM (JAPANESE) OVER THE CLIFF. THEY WERE GOING TO STINK AND FLIES AND ALL OF THAT, AND CAUSE DISEASE, SAID THE SURGEON.

WE SPENT THE MAJOR PART OF THE MORNING THROWING THEM OVER THE CLIFF. THAT WAS THE END OF THAT BATTLE. WE STAYED THERE, RESTING FOR ONE OR TWO DAYS. THEN, THE ORDER CAME DOWN, WE WERE TO GO DOWN THAT RAVINE AND SEE IF THERE WERE ANY MORE JAPS LEFT. F COMPANY HAD ALREADY GONE AROUND THIS WAY FOR THE BEACH AND THEY HAD GOTTEN SOME FIRE AND THEY COULDN'T GO ANY FURTHER BECAUSE OF THE CLIFFS, SO THEY ORDERED MY COMPANY TO COME DOWN THIS RAVINE AND COME DOWN THIS OTHER SIDE TO SEE IF THERE WERE ANY JAPS THERE.

WE HEADED DOWN THERE THAT MORNING AFTER THAT NIGHT WHEN THE JAPS CHARGED. WHEN WE GOT DOWN HERE, ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE AND THE JAPS WERE IN THE CLIFFS FIRING DOWN ON THE BEACH ON US. WE COULDN'T GO THIS WAY OR THAT WAY SO WE WERE PINNED DOWN. THEY KILLED MY SQUAD SERGEANT AND ABOUT SEVEN OTHERS. EVERYBODY HIT THE GROUND. I WAS IN WATER ABOUT SHOULDER DEEP. I HIT THE WATER. I COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING. IF ANYBODY MOVED, THEY FIRED SO, EVERYBODY PRETENDED THEY WERE DEAD. NOBODY MOVED. FINALLY, THE COMPANY COMMANDER, LT. GIFFORD HAD TAKEN OVER THE COMPANY. HE HAPPENED TO BE RIGHT AGAINST THE CLIFF WITH THE RADIOMAN. WHEN HE SAW WHAT HAPPENED, HE GOT ON THE RADIO AND HE CALLED SOMEWHERE AND SAID HE WANTED THE NAVY TO SEND TO EVACUATE THE COMPANY. WE WAITED THERE FOR A HALF HOUR. NOBODY MOVED. YOU COULD HEAR A PIN DROP. I PLAYED I WAS DEAD. ALL OF A SUDDEN I HEARD THIS PROPELLER

AND A BARGE CAME UP. THEY COULDN'T GET TOO CLOSE BECAUSE OF THE ROCKS. IT WAS REAL ROCKY. HE GOT AS CLOSE AS HE COULD. THEY HAD TWIN 50's MOUNTED ON THE BARGE AND THEY WERE HOSING THE CLIFF. THE GUY WHO WAS MANNING THE 50's GOT SHOT. ONE OF THE LIEUTENANTS, JACK MARAN LEFT THE BEACH AND JUMPED ON THE BARGE AND HE FIRED THE 50's WHILE WE WERE EVACUATING. THE COMPANY COMMANDER YELLED,"NOBODY GETS ON THE BARGE UNTIL WE GET ALL THAT ARE WOUNDED OR DEAD FIRST."

I HAD TO GO BACK WITH THE OTHER GUYS TO PICK UP BODIES I SAW THAT A SERGEANT HAD GOTTEN KILLED. WHEN A GUY IS DEAD, THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME. I THOUGHT THAT WAS MY PLATOON SERGEANT. THE KID HAD GOTTEN SHOT IN THE NECK.. WHEN I GOT TO HIM, THE BLOOD WAS GURGLING DOWN HERE. I TRIED TO STOP THE BLOOD. I'M NOT TOO STRONG TO SEE THINGS LIKE THIS. I THINK HE WAS ALREADY DEAD,BUT TOOK A CHANCE TO STOP YHE WOUND.

DICK

WE WERE TALKING ABOUT GOING BACK AND GETTING THE SERGEANT.

TONY

YEAH. WE PUT HIM ON THE BARGE. WE GOT ALL OF THEM, ALL THE FELLOWS WHO HAD BEEN SHOT, KILLED OR WOUNDED,. WE PUT THEM ON THE BARGES AND THE BARGES LEFT THE SHORE. I WAS LAYING ON THE BARGE WITH A LOT OF WATER ON THE BOTTOM. LAYING IN THE WATER AND I LOOKED, RIGHT HERE WAS THIS FACE. THEN I REALIZED MY NOSE WAS VERY CLOSE. I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. IT WAS MY SQUAD SERGANT. I JUST LAID DOWN ON THE DECK AND ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE BEACH. I COULDN'T GET OFF THE BARGE. IT TOOK SEVERAL GUYS TO GET ME OFF. WE JUST LAID ON THE SAND WAITING TO DIE OR SOMETHING. AT ANY RATE WE LAID ON THE BEACH, WHICH WAS CALLED NORTH BEACH FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS TO RECOVER. THEN WE WALKED TO THE TOPSIDE. EVERYBODY WAS HEART BROKEN CARRYING OUR OWN DEAD UP THERE.

WE HAD LOST NOT ONLY THE GUYS FROM THE BANZAI THE NIGHT BEFORE AND NOW THOSE GUYS ON THE BEACH. WHEN WE GOT UP THERE, WE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF THE COMPANY LEFT. THEY PULLED US TO THE TOPSIDE. WE WERE NOT TO DO ANYTHING ELSE THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS. WE STAYED UP THERE ON TOPSIDE TRYING TO GET OVER THAT.

OTHER INSTANCES HAPPENED THERE THAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT BECAUSE IT HAPPENED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OF THE COMPANYS IN THE 1ST BATTALION WAS ON TOP OF ONE OF THE HILLS THE NIGHT THE HILL EXPLODED. IT KILLED ABOUT HALF THE COMPANY. I WASN'T THERE.

BASICALLY, THE CAMPAIGN FOR CORREGIDOR WAS OVER. WE HAD FINISHED AND WENT BACK TO MINDORO. WE WERE THERE ON MINDORO TWO WEEKS. THEN IS WHEN I TOLD YOU THEY GAVE US THE CHUTES AND THEY PUT US ON THE PLANES AND FLEW US: WE WERE GOING TO JUMP BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE. ABOUT HALF WAY THERE, THEY TOLD US TO TAKE THE CHUTES OFF

AND THE PLANE LANDED ON AN ISLAND CALLED CEBU. THEY PUT US ON A BARGE THERE AND WE LANDED ON NEGROSS. BY THEN, I WAS SQUAD SERGEANT BECAUSE EVERYBODY ELSE WAS GONE. THEY HAD GOTTEN A WHOLE BUNCH OF REPLACEMENTS. I WAS SQUAD SERGEANT WHEN WE LEFT CORREGIDOR.

WE WENT TO NEGROS, MADE A LANDING ON THE WEST SIDE OF NEGROS. WHAT HAPPENED THERE, THE 40TH DIVISION, WHICH IS A CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD UNIT ATTACKED THE ISLAND OF NEGROSS. THEY FOUND OUT THERE WERE MORE JAPANESE THERE THAN THEY FIGURED, SO THEY NEEDED SOME EXTRA AID, SO THEY SENT THE 503 OVER THERE. WE TOOK OVER THE MAIN PART OF THE ISLAND. I DON'T KNOW WHERE IN THE HELL; ALL THE RAIN CONDITION, IT WAS WET. WE ENDED UP HAVING TO CLEAN THE ISLAND OURSELVES. WE WERE THERE FROM MARCH, THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST WHEN THE WAR ENDED ON NEGROS.

LIKE I TOLD YOU BEFORE, THE JAPANESE HAD LEFT THE COAST AREA, THE BEACHES AND WE HAD TO CLEAN THEM OUT HILL BY HILL IN THE BUNKERS UNTIL WE HAD REACHED THE HIGHEST HILL ON NEGROSS. IT WAS COLD AND FOGGY AND DAMP. IT WAS JUST LIKE BEING CLOSE TO THE NORTH POLE. WE HAD REACHED THE HIGHEST MOUNTAINS AND WE WERE SEEING THE OUTLINE OF HILLS ONE NIGHT WHEN WE HEARD ----- THE RADIO MAN WAS LISTENING AND ALL AT ONCE, WE THOUGHT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED. HE YELLED THAT THE WAR WAS OVER. IMMEDIATELY, THE WORD WENT DOWN THE LINE THAT THE WAR WAS OVER BUT, THE JAPANESE DIDN'T KNOW IT. ITS OVER BUT ITS NOT OVER.

WE CONTUED PATROLLING AT NEGROSS FOR SEVERAL DAYS. WE COULDN'T GET WORD FROM THEM . AFTER A NUMBER OF WEEKS, THEY PULLED US BACK TO A LITTLE TOWN WHERE AN AMERICAN LUMBER YARD HAD BEEN. WE WENT TO THE LUMBER YARD AND CAMPED THERE, A REST AREA FOR THE COMPANY. WE ASSIGNED SOME OF THE COMPANYS TO GO OUT AND MEET THE JAPANESE. WORD HAD GOTTEN BACK TO THE REGIMENT THAT THEY WERE READY TO SURRENDER.

MY COMPANY DIDN'T GO BUT I THINK F COMPANY WENT OUT, WAY OUT IN THE STICKS AND WAITED FOR THE JAPANESE TO SURRENDER. THEN WORD GOT BACK TO BATTALION HEADQUARTERS THAT THERE WERE SO MANY JAPANESE COMING DOWN THAT THE COMPANY COULDN'T HANDLE THEM. WE WERE LOOKING WAY BACK IN THE HILLS AND AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE, THERE WAS A COLUMN OF THEM COMING DOWN. WE WATCHED AND WATCHED FOR A LONG WAY OFF TO SEE WHEN THE COLUMN WAS GOING TO END. THEY KEPT COMING IN AND COMING IN AND FINALLY AN OFFICER WENT OUT THERE WITH A WHITE FLAG AND STOPPED THEM.

THEY SENT 2 OR 3 DELEGATES TO MEET WITH OUR OFFICERS. THEN THE OFFICERS CAME BACK AND RADIOED BACK TO HEADQUARTERS AND SAID,, "THEY WANT TO SURRENDER BUT THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM THAT WE CAN'T HANDLE THEM. A LOT OF THEM WERE SICK AND THEY NEED HELP AND WE CAN'T DO IT. WE DON'T WANT TO TAKE THE SURRENDER." THEY WERE TOLD TO GO BACK AND TELL THE JAPANESE TO STAY RIGHT WHERE THEY WERE.

THEY WOULD NOT ACCEPT. THEY HAD SICK AND WOUNDED AND WANTED TO SURRENDER

NO MATTER WHAT. THE CAPTAIN SAID, "WELL, WE WILL TAKE THEM." WE WENT AHEAD AND ORGANIZED THEM. WE HAD THEM THROW THEIR WEAPONS AND SWORDS AND EVERYTHING IN A PILE AND HERDED THEM OUT INTO THIS BIG FIELD. FROM THERE, AFTER A COUPLE OF DAYS, THEY SENT SOME TRUCKS OUT WITH RICE AND FOOD FOR THEM, WHATEVER MEDICAL HELP THEY COULD GIVE THEM. AFTER A COUPLE OF DAYS, WE TOOK THEM IN TRUCKS TO THE LUMBER YARD AND MADE THEM: PUT A BARBED WIRE FENCE AROUND THEM AND KEPT THEM PRISONER UNTIL I LEFT THERE, STANDING GUARD. WHILE WE DID IT, WE ORGANIZED A LOOKOUT OF 2 MEN HERE AND 2 MEN HERE, WITH TWO MEN IN EACH STATION, ONE AMERICAN AND ONE JAPANESE. I WAS ASSIGNED WITH ONE JAPANESE SERGEANT IN THIS CORNER. THEY WERE VERY HAPPY WITH RATIONS OF RICE. I REMEMBER THEY EVEN HAD SUMO WRESTLING DOWN THERE. THEY WERE TRYING TO KEEP BUSY. FROM THERE, THEY SHIPPED THEM BACK HOME.

DICK

SO, THE WAR WAS OVER, THEY WERE STILL CONSIDERED PRISONERS.?

TONY

YEAH. I UNDERSTAND. ONE OF THE BOYS WAS TELLING ME THIS MORNING THAT ONE OF MY LIEUTENANTS, INGRAM, WAS MADE PROVOST MARSHALL OF THE PRISONERS. THEY PUT THEM ON A SHIP AND SENT THEM BACK TO JAPAN. HE HAD TO GO ON THE SHIP. THEY WANTED TO GO HOME.

DICK

THEY HAD TO ESCORT THEM TO MAKE SURE THEY GOT BACK TO THEIR HOMELAND AND MATRICULATED BACK? AT COREGIDOR, ABOUT HOW MANY JAPANESE WERE ON THAT ISLAND?

TONY

WHEN WE WERE GETTING VACCINATIONS, THEY SAID THERE WERE UNDER A THOUSAND. SOMEBODY SAID, 800. I THINK, I AM NOT CERTAIN, BUT I THINK THERE WERE BETWEEN SEVEN AND EIGHT THOUSAND JAPS.

DICK

HOW MANY PRISONERS WERE TAKEN?

TONY

MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THERE WERE 21 PRISONERS TAKEN AND ONE OF MY SOLDIERS KILLED ONE OF THEM WHEN HE TRIED TO GET AWAY.

DICK

DID ALL OF THE JAPS END UP LOSING SEVEN OR EIGHT THOUSAND PEOPLE ON THAT ISLAND?

TONY

I UNDERSTAND THAT AFTER THE 503 LEFT CORREGIDOR, THEY SENT GRAVES REGISTRATION OUT TO CLEAN UP AND SEVERAL JAPANESE, NOT A GREAT DEAL, MAYBE 30 OR 40 SOMETHING SURRENDERED TO THEM. THIS WAS A GRAVES REGISTRATION GROUP TO PICK UP AND CLEAN UP, TO MAKE SURE THERE WEREN'T ANY OF OUR MEN LEFT BEHIND. THEY HAD THESE JAPANESE GROUPS SURRENDER TO THEM BUT, NOT MANY. MAYBE 40 TO 50, SOMETHING LIKE THAT. BSICALLY, WE KILLED ALL THE JAPANESE THAT WERE THERE AND I WOULD SAY, IF WERE THERE A FEW MORE DAYS, WE WOULD HAVE KILLED THEM ALL.

DICK

WOULD THEY GET HOLED UP IN THESE CAVES AND BUNKERS?

TONY

THEY WERE VERY CLEVER. THEY TRIED TO SUCK YOU IN. THEY WOULD BE ON A PATROL, LET YOU GO UNTIL YOU GOT CLOSE ENOUGH AND THEN THEY WOULD OPEN UP. THEY WERE WELL CAMOUFLAGED AND WHEN YOU FOUND THEM, TRY TO GET THEM OUT. I WAS WOUNDED TWICE ON THE ROAD, THE HOKAIDO ROAD THERE IN NEGROSS. THEY HAD A BIG GUN IN THE JUNGLE ON THE FLAT LAND AND WE WERE COMING UP THE MOUNTAIN. THEY OPENED UP WITH THE ARTILLERY PIECE AND ALL YOU COULD SEE WAS THE FLASH OF THE GUN. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY ARTILLERY THAT HAD THAT DISTANCE. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY AIR SUPPORT. WE SAW THE GUNS BY THE FLASHES. WE LOST SEVERAL GUYS THERE. I WAS HIT MYSELF. I WAS HIT TWICE WITH THE FRAGMENTS. WE KEPT GOING UP WIPING OUT BUNKERS BUT, I NEVER SAW ANY JAPS FACE TO FACE.

DICK

DURING YOUR TIME IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC DID YOU GET MAIL?

TONY

YEAH. IT WAS SPORADIC. MY MOTHER AND MY GRANDMOTHER USED TO WRITE TO ME. I USED TO GET A LETTER ABOUT EVERY MONTH. IF YOU WERE IN THE FIELD, THERE WAS NO WAY TO GET THE MAIL TO YOU. EVERY NOW AND THEN, SOMEHOW, THE MAIL WOULD GET THROUGH BECAUSE THEY CAME TO FOXHOLES BY THE COMPANY CLERK. I USED TO GET A LETTER ABOUT EVERY MONTH.

DICK

YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER THAT YOU WERE CLOSE TO HIM? WHAT DID YOU THINK OF YOUR OFFICERS? WERE THEY GOOD?

TONY

YEAH, THEY WERE VERY GOOD. WE HAD A PARTICULAR 1ST LIEUTENANT WHEN I FIRST WENT IN. HIS NAME WAS WILBUR GRANT. HE WAS A LITTLE TINY GUY AND THEY CALLED HIM "BITSY" GRANT. HE IS STILL MY FRIEND. I TOOK TO HIM BECAUSE HE WAS A REAL SHORT LITTLE GUY. I LIKED HIM VERY MUCH. WE STILL COMMUNICATE.

THE NON-COMS WERE VERY GOOD. THE NON-COMS IN THE 503 WHEN I JOINED HAD BEEN IN THE ARMY BEFORE THE WAR. THEY HAD BEEN IN THE LOUISIANA MANEUVERS AND BEEN IN A LOT OF THE INFANTRY UNITS SCATTERED AROUND THE UNITED STATES. THEY HAD BEEN IN THE C C C CAMPS SO THEY WERE VERY MILITARY MINDED. THOSE WERE THE GUYS THAT ACTUALLY FORMED THE ARMY, THE C C C AND OLD INFANTRY UNITS ESPECIALLY IN THE PARATROOPERS.

DICK

AFTER THE WAR, WHEN DID YOU GET BACK AND HOW DID YOU GET BACK?

TONY

BY THAT TIME, I WAS AN OLD TIMER. WE HAD GOTTEN A WHOLE BUNCH OF REPLACEMENTS. IN MY SQUAD, I HAD EVERYBODY: EVERYBODY IN MY SQUAD WAS A NEW MAN. NONE OF THE MEN HAD SERVED AS CAREER ARMY. I WAS THE ONLY ONE LEFT. WHEN MY TIME TO COME HOME, THEY TOLD ME TO PACK UP MY STUFF AND I WAS LEAVING . THEY SENT US ON A BOAT OUT TO MINDINAO TO THE SOUTHERN MOST ISLAND DOWN HERE. THE HAD A REPLACEMENT DEPOT DOWN THERE WAITING TO GET A SHIP. THEY HAD A FEW PARATROOPERS. MOST OF THE GUYS WERE FROM INFANTRY UNITS. THEY GOT A WHOLE SHIPLOAD AND THEY BROUGHT US. ABOUT HALF GOT OFF AT SAN FRANCISCO AND THE OTHER HALF GOT OFF AT LOS ANGELES.

DICK

YOU GOT OFF IN LOS ANGELES? DID YOU GO BACK TO PHOENIX THEN?

TONY

WE HIT LOS ANGELES DECEMBER 24, 1945. WHEN WE GOT OFF THE BOAT, THE BOAT DOCKED RIGHT AT FORT MACARTHUR. EVERYBODY IN CAMP HAD GONE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS EXCEPT A VERY SMALL SKELETON CREW. THE FIRST SERGEANT SAID, "I APOLOGISE, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO, EVERYBODY IS GONE. I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I WILL DO, YOU GUYS GO TO THE WAREHOUSE AND GET YOURSELF SOME UNIFORMS. IF YOU WANT TO GO ANYWHERE, I'LL GIVE YOU A PASS."

THERE WAS NOTHING TO DO IN CAMP, SO WE WENT TO THE WAREHOUSE. THEY HAD STACKS OF WINTER TIME WOOLENS, WE GOT THE BEST FIT WE COULD. THERE WERE NO TAILORS, PUT ON THE NEW UNIFORMS SMELLING OF MOTH BALLS AND A COUPLE OF THESE GUYS TOOK THE TROLLEY AT THE GATE OF FORT MACARTHUR AND WENT DOWNTOWN L.A. WE CAME BACK THE NEXT DAY.

THEY PUT ME ON THE TRAIN TWO DAYS LATER. I ARRIVED ON NEW YEARS EVE. WHEN I ARRIVED IN PHOENIX, IT WAS MIDNIGHT AND GOT OFF THE TRAIN, IT WAS RAINING LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS. THERE WASN'T A SOUL AROUND. THE STATION WAS DARK EXCEPT ONE GUY STANDING WITH CRUTCHES. HE WAS GETTING ON THE TRAIN AS I WAS GETTING OFF. I LOOKED AT HIM AND IT WAS MY COUSIN. MY COUSIN HAD BEEN IN THE 17TH AIRBORNE AND HE HAD GOTTEN SHOT AT THE RHINE. HE WAS AT A HOSPITAL IN COLORADO AND HAD COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS. HE HAD AN AMPUTATED FOOT AND HE WAS GOING BACK WHEN IT WAS TIME I HELPED HIM ON THE TRAIN.

DICK

WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER THE WAR?

TONY

AFTER THE WAR, FOR A WHOLE YEAR I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. I HAD QUITE A BIT OF MONEY SAVED. ACTUALLY, I SLEPT IN A LITTLE SHED, IN A SLEEPING BAG. IT BROKE HER HEART TO SEE ME LONELY. I SLEPT IN THE SHED FOR ABOUT A YEAR.

THEN, A FRIEND OF MINE WHO HAD BEEN A SUBMARINER; HE HAD COME HOME EARLY, WAS A PROFESSOR AT ARIZONA STATE IN TEMPE. HE PUSHED ME BACK TO SCHOOL. I WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA.

DICK

DID YOU GET A DEGREE THEN?

TONY

I GOT A DEGREE IN PHARMACY.

DICK

DID YOU GET A JOB IN A PHARMACY?

TONY

NO I WENT INTO BUSINESS FOR MYSELF. I OWNED MY OWN BUSINESS THROUGHOUT MY CAREER, I OWNED NINE PHARMACIES. I RETIRED WHEN I WAS 67. I'M 80 YEARS OLD. THAT WAS THIRTEEN YEARS AGO.

DICK

WHERE WERE YOUR PHARMACIES?

TONY

IN CALIFORNIA.

DICK

DID YOU SELL THEM TO SOMEBODY ELSE”

TONY

I SOLD THEM FOR SEVERAL THOUSAND EACH AND RETIRED AND QUIT. NOW, I SPEND MY TIME TRAVELING.

DICK

DID YOU EVER GET MARRIED?

TONY

YES, I DID. I GOT MARRIED AND I HAVE THREE SONS AND ONE DAUGHTER. I THINK I WORKED FOR ABOUT 24 YEARS.

DICK

DO YOU HAVE ANY GRANDCHILDEN”

TONY

I HAVE ONE GRANDSON IN THE ARMY. HE IS IN THE CAVALRY. I AM TRYING TO GET HIM INTO JUMP SCHOOL. YOU CAN'T GET INTO JUMP SCHOOL EARLY BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE MANY PARATROOPERS BECAUSE THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM. YOU GOT A BIG WAITING LIST. HE ASKED ME IF I WOULD DO SOMETHING TO HELP HIM GET INTO JUMP SCHOOL. HE IS AT FORT GEORGIA AND CLOSE TO FORT BENNING. HE SAID, “CAN YOU DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT, GRANDPA>“ I USED TO KNOW THE COMMANDANT OF THE JUMP SCHOOL. HE SERVED IN VIET NAM. I DON'T KNOW IF HE IS STILL THE COMMANDANT. I KNOW IF I CAN GET A HOLD OF HIM,, HE CAN GET HIM IN.

DICK

BACK AT CORREGIDOR, WAS THE 503 THE ONLY ASSAULT? THERE WAS A BEACH LANDING TOO, WASN'T THERE?

TONY

YEAH. I LEFT SOMETHING OUT. THE PLAN WAS TO PARACHUTE THE THREE BATTALIONS ON CORREGIDOR BUT, THE INJURIES AND THE HOSING DOWN THE FIELD, THEY DECIDED WE WERE NOT GOING TO JUMP THE THIRD BATTALION. THEY BROUGHT THE FIRST BATTALION IN BY BARGE ON THE SAFEST LANDING THE SAME MOMENT THAT WE IN THE 2ND BATTALION WAS JUMPING, ONE BATTALION OF THE 34TH INFANTRY WAS MAKING A LANDING ON THE NORTH SHORE. IT WAS THAT BATTALION OF THE 34TH INFANTRY AND THE BATTALION OF THE 503. BASICALLY, WE HAD 3,200 TOTAL.

DICK

WITH ABOUT 7 TO 8 THOUSAND JAPANESE. YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO OUTMAN THEM. BASED ON THE NUMBERS YOU HAD, IT WAS SEVEN TO ONE.

TONY

OH YEAH. THEY SAID IT WAS GOING TO BE A CAKEWALK. ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATION WE GOT, THERE WERE ABOUT 800 JAPANESE ON THE ISLAND.

DICK

WHAT STRATEGIC POSITION OR WHAT WAS STRATEGICLY IMPORTANT ABOUT CORREGIDOR? JUST A PART OF THE PHILLIPINES WE HAD TO TAKE BACK?

TONY

I REALLY DON'T THINK THE WAR WOULD HAVE ENDED ANY DIFFERENT IF WE HAD NEVER TAKEN CORREGIDOR, BECAUSE WE COULD ISOLATE THEM. MACARTHUR ISOLATED THOUSANDS IN NEW GUINEA. WE COULD HAVE ISOLATED THEM.

DICK

IT'S A NARROW ISLAND VERY CLOSE TO THE MAINLAND BUT IT IS AN ISLAND.

TONY

WE COULD ISOLATE THEM AND JUST STARVE THEM OUT. THAT'S BASICALLY WHAT THEY DID IN 1942. THEY STARVED US OUT, THE JAPANESE DID. WE COULD HAVE DONE THE SAME THING. WE COULD HAVE PUT ARTILLERY OVER ON BATAAN AND WITH THE AIR FORCE WE HAD, WE COULD HAVE JUST FLATTENED THE WHOLE ISLAND. BY THAT TIME, THE AIR CORPS WAS SO POWERFUL, WITH ARTILLERY----I THINK IT WAS ALMOST A POLITICAL THING THEN ALSO. MACARTHUR HAD A BIG EGO. HE WANTED TO MAKE POINTS.

DICK

I THINK I HAVE TO AGREE WITH THAT.

TONY

IT REALLY HAD NO STRATEGIC VALUE. THE GUNS WERE NOT WORKING. WE HAD DESTROYED SOME OF THE JAPANESE. THERE WAS NOTHING ON THE ISLAND THAT ADVANCED THE WAR ANY.

DICK

IT SEEMS THOUGH THAT WITH THAT MANY JAPANESE THERE, THAT THEY HAD SOME STRATEGIC POSITION OR WAS THAT IMPORTANT MILITARILY?

TONY

WE THINK YOU ARE RIGHT. WE THINK THAT -----'CAUSE THEY NEVER DREAMED THAT THE PARATROOPERS COULD JUMP ON THERE. THE ADVANTAGE WE HAD, THEY SAID---- AS A MATTER OF FACT, MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT IT WAS DISCUSSED EXTENSIVELY NOT ONLY OUR ARMY AND IN THEIR ARMY THAT THERE WAS NO WAY IN THE WORLD THAT WE COULD JUMP.

DICK

I WONDER WHY WE DIDN'T USE THE SAME TACTICS ON OKINAWA?

TONY

THE MARINES HAD A DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHY ABOUT WAR THAN THE ARMY. THEY GO HEAD ON. I FEEL THAT GEN. MACARTHUR OR WHOEVER DID THE PLANNING ASSAULT. I MEAN, WE COULD HAVE GOTTEN IN VERY SERIOUS FIGHTS DOWN IN NEW GUINEA BECAUSE THEY CAME WITHIN A FEW MILES FROM THE PORT WHERE WE WERE AND THE CAMP THE 503 HAD IN NEW GUINEA BY PORT MORSEBY. I MEAN, THEY CAME WITHIN JUST MILES. THE AUSTRALIANS HELD THEM BACK REALLY, BECAUSE THERE WAS JUST A LITTLE PASS AND THEY WERE ABLE TO STOP THEM BEFORE THEY GOT OVER THE MOUNTAINS. THERE WERE THOUSAND OF JAPANESE THERE IN NEW GUINEA ALL ALONG THE COAST. ALMOST ANY PLACE WE LANDED WE COULD HAVE RUN INTO SOME VERY, VERY SERIOUS FIGHTING. AS YOU SAY, LET THEM WHITHER ON THE VINES. I THINK WE COULD HAVE DONE THAT ON CORREGIDOR.

DICK

I APPRECIATE TONY. I HAVE ENJOYED LISTENING TO YOU. DID WE MISS ANYTHING THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

TONY

I THINK WE GOT IT ALL.

DICK

OK, WELL THANK YOU.

END OF TAPE

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FEBRUARY 2010