

ATTACK BY UNITED STATES TROOPS ON MOUNT DAJO.

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L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING

COMPLETE COPIES OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN  
RECEIVED IN OR SENT FROM THE WAR DEPARTMENT PER-  
TAINING TO THE RECENT ATTACK BY TROOPS OF THE UNITED  
STATES ON MOUNT DAJO.

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MARCH 26, 1906.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be  
printed.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, March 23, 1906.*

SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from the  
Secretary of the Senate, advising me that the Senate has passed the  
following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of War is hereby directed to send to the Senate full  
copies of all reports and all other communications which have passed to this date  
between the officials of the United States in the United States, and any such officials  
in the Philippine Islands, respecting the recent attack by troops of the United States  
on Mount Dajo.

In response thereto I beg to inclose herewith complete copies of all  
communications that have been received in or sent from this Depart-  
ment pertaining to the action at Mount Dajo.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. TAFT,  
*Secretary of War.*

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

Hereto attached are complete copies of all communications that have  
been received in or sent from The Military Secretary's Office and that  
pertain to the action at Mount Dajo, near Jolo, Philippine Islands,  
March 6 to 8, 1906.

MARCH 23, 1906.

F. C. AINSWORTH,  
*The Military Secretary.*

[Cablegram received at the War Department, March 9, 1906, 9.05 a.m.]

Following condensed from Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood, Zamboanga, March 9:

Troops, naval detachment, constabulary, Col. Joseph W. Duncan commanding, attacked Moros' fortifications in crater, on Mount Dajo, near Jolo. Action lasted afternoon March 6, morning March 8. Mount Dajo 2,100 feet high, 500 feet angle, 50°; lava ridges, heavy timber. Artillery lifted block and tackle 300 feet. Moros depredated from stronghold past eight months and resisted to the death. About 600 killed. Major General Wood, Brig. Gen. Tasker H. Bliss present throughout.

Killed: Army, 15 enlisted. Capt. Tyree R. Rivers, wounded in thigh, slight; First Lieut. Gordon Johnston, wounded in shoulder, serious; First Lieut. Ernest H. Agnew, wounded in hand, slight; First Lieut. Wylie T. Conway, eye, slight; 32 enlisted men. Names enlisted men killed, wounded, reported later. Navy wounded: Ensign H. D. Cooke, wounded in foot, serious; Cockswain Gilmore, elbow, slight; one seaman, slight.

Constabulary: Killed, 3 enlisted. John R. White, wounded in thigh, serious, 13 enlisted. Total killed, 18; wounded, 52. Troops, naval detachment, constabulary, highly commended.

ANDREWS,

In the absence of the division commander.

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington*.

[Cablegram received at the War Department, March 12, 1906, 7.50 a.m.]

The following is a list of the killed at Mount Dajo fight:

Company B, Nineteenth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: Barsley Box.

Company D, Nineteenth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: Edward Kilgore, Thomas Harrison, John Tomaszewski, Charles Banks.

Company L, Nineteenth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: John N. Pfel.

Company F, Sixth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: Carl H. Bailey, John P. Hines.

Company G, Sixth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: Walter Hagedorn.

Company K, Sixth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: John R. Shuler.

Company M, Sixth Regiment, U. S. Infantry: Henry C. Wriedt, Purl De Busk.

Troop F, Fourth Regiment, U. S. Cavalry: Louis C. Herr, Wm. E. Kelly.

Troop I, Fourth Regiment, U. S. Cavalry: Robert J. Bastian, Charles J. Hoffer.

Troop K, Fourth Regiment, U. S. Cavalry: Lee Calve.

All wounded are doing well.

ANDREWS,

In the absence of the division commander.

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington*.

[Memorandum for The Military Secretary.]

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
*March 12, 1906.*

Please transmit the following cablegram to Wood, Manila:

It is charged that there was a wanton slaughter of Moros, men, women, and children, in the fight in Jolo at Mount Dajo. I wish you would send me at once all the particulars in respect to this matter, stating exact facts.

TAFT.

By direction of the Secretary of War:

FRED W. CARPENTER,  
*Private Secretary.*

[Cablegram as sent in cipher.]

THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
*March 12, 1906.*

WOOD, *Manila*:

It is charged there was wanton slaughter Moros, men, women, and children, in the fight Mount Dajo. Wish you would send me at once all the particulars with respect to this matter, stating exact facts.

TAFT.

AINSWORTH.

[Extract from cablegram received at the War Department, March 13, 1906, 9.53 a. m.]

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington*:

In answer to Secretary of War's request for information March 12, I was present throughout practically entire action, and inspected top of crater after action was finished. Am convinced no man, woman, or child was wantonly killed. A considerable number of women and children were killed in the fight—number unknown—for the reason that they were actually in the works when assaulted, and were unavoidably killed in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting which took place in the narrow inclosed spaces. Moro women wore trousers and were dressed, armed much like the men, and charged with them. The children were in many cases used by the men as shields while charging troops.

These incidents are much to be regretted, but it must be understood that the Moros, one and all, were fighting not only as enemies, but religious fanatics, believing Paradise to be their immediate reward if killed in action with Christians. They apparently desired that none be saved. Some of our men, one a hospital steward, were cut up while giving assistance to wounded Moros, by the wounded, and by those feigning death, for the purpose of getting this vengeance (opportunity). I personally ordered every assistance given wounded Moros, and that food and water should be sent them and medical attendance. In addition, friendly Moros were at once directed to proceed to the mountain for this purpose. I do not believe that in this or in any other fight any American soldier wantonly killed a Moro woman or child, or that he ever did it except unavoidably in close action. Action was most desperate, and was impossible for men fighting literally for their lives in close quarters to distinguish who would be injured by fire. In all actions against Moros we have begged Moros again and again to fight as men, and keep women and children out of it. I assume entire

responsibility for action of the troops in every particular, and if any evidence develops in any way bearing out the charges will act at once.

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WOOD.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, March 13, 1906.*

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The account of the engagement on Mount Dajo, on the island of Jolo, between our forces and a large band of Moro robbers, in which the fighting lasted for three or four days, showed such a large loss among the Moros as to give rise in a part of the public press to the criticism that there had been a wanton destruction by our troops of Moro lives, including those of woman and children. Inquiries were made of me by members of the Senate and House of Representatives in respect to the latter. Accordingly I yesterday directed that the following telegram be sent to General Wood:

It is charged that there was a wanton slaughter of Moros—men, women, and children—in the fight in Jolo at Mount Dajo. I wish you would send me at once all the particulars in respect to this matter, stating exact facts.

General Wood's answer came to-day. It seems to me to show most clearly that the unfortunate loss of life of the men, women, and children among the Moros was wholly unavoidable, in view of their deliberate use of their women and children in actual battle, and their fanatical and savage desire that their women and children should perish with them if defeat were to come. They seem to have exhibited in this fight the well-known treachery of the uncivilized Mohammedan when wounded, of attempting to kill those approaching for the purpose of giving aid and relief. General Wood's dispatch is as follows:

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington:*

In answer to Secretary of War's request for information March 12, I was present throughout practically entire action and inspected top of crater after action was finished. Am convinced no man, woman, or child was wantonly killed. A considerable number of women and children were killed in the fight—number unknown—for the reason that they were actually in the works when assaulted, and were unavoidably killed in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting which took place in the narrow inclosed spaces. Moro women wore trousers, and were dressed, armed much like the men, and charged with them. The children were in many cases used by the men as shields while charging troops. These incidents are much to be regretted, but it must be understood that the Moros, one and all, were fighting not only as enemies but religious fanatics, believing Paradise to be their immediate reward if killed in action with Christians. They apparently desired that none be saved. Some of our men, one a hospital steward, were cut up while giving assistance to wounded Moros by the wounded and by those feigning death for the purpose of getting this vengeance. I personally ordered every assistance given wounded Moros, and that food and water should be sent them and medical attendance. In addition friendly Moros were at once directed to proceed to mountain for this purpose. I do not believe that in this or in any other fight any American soldier wantonly killed a Moro woman or child, or that he ever did it except unavoidably in close action. Action was most desperate and was impossible for men fighting literally for their lives in close quarters to distinguish who would be injured by fire. In all actions against Moros we have begged Moros again and again to fight as men and keep women and children out of it. I assume entire responsibility for action of the troops in every particular, and if any evidence develops in any way bearing out the charges will act at once.

WOOD.

Very sincerely yours,

WILLIAM H. TAFT.

The PRESIDENT.

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
Washington, March 14, 1906.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I have received your letter of March 13 with accompanying cable of General Wood answering your inquiry as to the alleged wanton slaughter of Moros. This answer is, of course, entirely satisfactory. The officers and enlisted men under General Wood's command have performed a most gallant and soldierly feat in a way that confers added credit on the American Army. They are entitled to the heartiest admiration and praise of all those of their fellow-citizens who are glad to see the honor of the flag upheld by the courage of the men wearing the American uniform.

Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Hon. WM. H. TAFT,  
*Secretary of War.*

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
March 14, 1906.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of War is hereby directed to send to the Senate copies of all reports and other communications between the War Department and any officials in the Philippine Islands respecting the recent attack by troops of the United States on Mount Dajo.

Attest:

CHARLES G. BENNETT,  
*Secretary.*

[First indorsement.]

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
Washington, D. C., March 15, 1906.

Respectfully returned to the Secretary of War with copies of all reports and other communications of record in this office respecting the recent attack by troops of the United States on Mount Dajo.

F. C. AINSWORTH,  
*The Military Secretary.*

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D C., March 16, 1906.

SIR: I am in receipt of a communication from the Secretary of the Senate advising me that the Senate has passed the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of War is hereby directed to send to the Senate copies of all reports and other communications between the War Department and any officials in the Philippine Islands respecting the recent attack by troops of the United States on Mount Dajo.

In response to the resolution, I inclose herewith all reports and other communications between the War Department and the officials of the Philippine Islands respecting the recent attack by troops of the United States on Mount Dajo.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. TAFT,  
*Secretary of War.*

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

[Cablegram received at the War Department March 18, 1906, 9.05 a. m.]

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington:*

If more detailed information concerning facts leading to Mount Dajo fight desired, suggest Maj. Hugh L. Scott called upon. He is thoroughly familiar with the situation, having spent eight months attempting to get these people off the mountain without fighting.

WOOD.

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[Telegram.]

THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, March 19, 1906.*

Maj. HUGH L. SCOTT,  
*Princeton, N. J.:*

The Secretary of War directs, as necessary for the public service, that you proceed immediately to this city for conference with him on Moro situation.

AINSWORTH,  
*The Military Secretary.*

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[Cablegram received at the War Department March 19, 1906, 8 a. m.]

THE MILITARY SECRETARY, *Washington:*

Sensational cables sent United States relating to Dajo fight were made up in Manila. No reference in any cable from Mindanao killing women and children. On receipt of the Col. George Andrews condensed report, Washington, American papers cabled for details. Reporters here had no information other than my report telegraphic to Col. George Andrews, and supplied the sensational features.

WOOD.

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[Memorandum for the Secretary of War.]

#### THE MOROS OF JOLO ISLAND.

The recent trouble in Jolo had its beginning over a year ago, when a Sulu Moro by the name of Pala ran amuck in the streets of Lahud, Dato, British North Borneo, and ran away after killing and wounding 26 people. He returned to his cotta on the south side of the Sulu Islands, about 15 miles from Jolo. It was not to be tolerated that the citizens of a friendly power should thus be murdered by savages under American jurisdiction, and an attempt was made to arrest Pala by surprise. His cotta was taken and destroyed, but he himself escaped in the jungle. He had many sympathizers, relatives, and friends in various parts of the island—among others, the people settled about Mount Dajo, who fired upon the American troops and depredated upon friendly Moros in the neighborhood. General Wood came down with troops from Mindanao (the Seventeenth Infantry was about to leave for the United States and had become depleted in numbers) to surround Pala's jungle and arrest him. He was fired upon on the way to Pala's jungle in the Tambang Pass by the Dajo people. One soldier

and several Moros were killed. Many of the Dajo people then ran up on Mount Dajo and began fortifying themselves. The troops went on, fought Pala, who would not surrender, and killed him.

They then went on to Tando Looc, where another band of sympathizers, who had been depredating upon friendly Moros, were fortified in a crater on a mountain about 25 miles from Jolo. By means of an old Moro, who was captured on the way, the chief of this band was induced, after many efforts and long waiting, to surrender, without a fight, to the commander of the force and give up his guns. General Wood, with the troops, spent the greater part of the day far from water under a tropical sun, waiting with the utmost patience on the dilatory tactics of the savages in order to accomplish the subjugation of this band without bloodshed.

Upon the return of General Wood to Jolo it was considered that the ringleaders were dead and the Moros had been punished enough, and the expedition disbanded. It was soon discovered that Dajo fugitives from the Tambang fight were on top of Mount Dajo. They put in a crop of rice and sweet potatoes inside the crater and had plenty of water there all the year round. They said they did not want to fight, and only wished to cultivate and reap their crops. A demand was made on their datos, Joakanain and Kalbi, for the guns of the ringleaders, which were surrendered, and they were told to come down and settle below, but could cultivate their crops above so as not to lose all their food. They promised to refrain from depredating upon anybody and to prevent anybody from using the mountain as a stronghold for thieves. Datos Joakanain and Kalbi, from whom the Dajo people had run away, exerted their power of command over them and kept them from depredating during the summer and fall. They accordingly caused about 150 of the original 200 reported to be on the mountain to come down and settle in their old homes below. A day or so before Thanksgiving I went to Zamboanga, 100 miles north, and returned about December 1. I found that during my absence some Moro had told the Dajo people that the governor would attack them at daylight on November 30. They all ran away on top of the mountain, sounded their gongs all night, and made ready for the attack. They considered that a state of war was on and reported that 40 armed Moros were going about at night to take property from friendly Moros. Several buffaloes had been taken when I arrived. Pressure was at once put upon Joakanain to allay this excitement and stop all depredations.

A letter was written General Wood detailing the circumstances and warning him of the proximity of the trouble if Joakanain should not have the power to control the Dajo people, whereupon General Wood ordered two companies of the Nineteenth Infantry to Jolo, as the cavalry squadron had not all arrived from the United States. Joakanain was able to prevent any further depredations, and said that if he was allowed time he would succeed in getting all the Moros off the mountain. All during the month of December he kept them quiet and brought in Ahko, who was the most prominent man there. Ahko wanted very much to get a dog. The governor gave him one and he went away much pleased, and did his utmost to make the others come off the mountain. The Sultan and his two brothers, Roja Muda and Dato Attick, also Majarajah, Opaus, and Sawajain, all influential Moros, went to the mountain and used their utmost endeavors.

I saw General Wood last about the 26th of December and told him the two companies of the Nineteenth Infantry would not be needed for the present, as the Moros were being kept down by Joakanain, and the order sending him to Jolo was revoked. While the elements of trouble were still there (the elements of trouble are always somewhere in Jolo), and it was thought I could leave them as well as at any other time, and accordingly I started on leave of absence on January 1.

The last advices by mail from Jolo were dated January 29, and the Dajo question not being mentioned, it was supposed the Moros remained quiet at least until that date. It is presumed that they got out of Joakanain's control entirely and began to depredate on other Moros, according to the Moro custom, and had to be subdued or else it would be necessary to abandon the effort to preserve law and order in Jolo. The policy of General Wood in that archipelago has always been to bring about peace and order as gently and with as little loss of life as possible. In every case when it has been necessary to arrest Moros charged with crime and they have gone into their strongholds and called their friends and relatives about them to resist arrest, every possible effort, extending in some cases over weeks and months, has been made to bring about the arrest without bloodshed. In the case of Biroa, mentioned in Colonel Wallace's report to the adjutant-general of the Philippines, June —, 1903, a murderer and a kidnaper fortified himself on a hill 15 miles from Jolo, called his friends and relatives about him and prepared for a fight. He was surrounded at daylight in October, 1903, and after many fruitless efforts were made to get him to come out and talk, his father allowed himself to be talked to at 2 p. m. At 5.30 p. m. the criminal himself was seen. At 6.30 p. m. he surrendered without a shot. He was placed upon Captain Bennet's naval gunboat *Albay* and sent into Jolo that night a prisoner. This has been the plan always, and has been successful when the chief can be gotten at to talk to, but when he refuses absolutely to talk and answers overtures with bullets, no recourse is left but to fight him as long as he resists or else permit criminals to have their way.

Paglima Amil and Prophet Tungalan, also Panglimas Dammang, and Amboutang were brought in without a shot being fired, as were the hostiles intrenched in the crater on Mount Talipau. The chief who surrendered at Mount Talipau came to Jolo to pay his respects to the Secretary of War last August, and is now a loyal friend of the Government. Maharajah Indanan, who appears most unfavorably in the records of the former governors of Jolo, in which it may be read: "That no peace or order can be expected in Jolo until Indanan is killed," in 1904, was made to pay 1,000 pesos for stolen cattle, and to tear down the new portions of his fort made to resist the law, and this without a shot or a drop of blood. He now controls the district of Parang; has under him probably 2,000 men whom he controls in American interests better than any other section of the island is controlled. He offered to send 1,000 men to fight the Moros on Mount Dajo. All the recourses of diplomacy exerted for six months in case of Laksamana Usap failed, because an Arab from Mecca sold him charms to make him and his fort invulnerable, which he believed in. He was called upon to surrender, but answered with bullets. When the fort had been bombarded for half a day he was called upon again to surrender, and replied: "You cowardly Americans may know what it

is to surrender, but we Moros do not understand what it means." After he had been killed, and two walls of the fort had been taken the survivors put up a white flag. The soldiers knowing well the feelings of the officers ceased firing before a command could be given. Several men were taken out, their wounds dressed by the surgeons, and sent to their homes, thus advertising throughout the archipelago that those who surrender will be well treated and not all killed as they would have been if the Moros had been successful. Before this fight began and after it was believed that negotiations had failed, four days were occupied sending prominent chiefs into the fort to induce women and children to come out. One chief, Maharajah Jagi, reported that he had taken out eighty himself.

It is not conceivable that this policy of humanity, carried out in every case in the past two years and a half, should now have been changed, especially as General Wood was there in person and no one would take more trouble to avoid unnecessary bloodshed than he. Mount Dajo is about midway in the island of Sulu and is over 2,000 feet high. Upon the top is the crater of a volcano long extinct. The mountain is 5 or 6 miles around the base, covered with trees in most parts, and has on its sides many landslides. As the core is of rock, after the soil has gotten a resting place on its sides and unusual rain falls the water is soaked up, the soil becomes very heavy, and as the rock is so steep the earth falls, breaking down trees below like an avalanche of snow. It is very steep and difficult to climb under most favorable circumstances, and to climb it successfully under fire is undoubtedly a most gallant feat of arms, and unless great skill had been used many more lives would have been lost among the troops. The Moros themselves considered the top of that mountain impregnable as they have food and can raise more, and an abundant supply of water is reported in the crater, which makes an ideal stronghold. As that mountain and crater cannot be destroyed it will always be a menace to peace and order in Jolo, unless the Moros for some superstitious reason shall avoid it hereafter.

Very respectfully,

H. L. SCOTT,  
*Major, Fourteenth Cavalry.*

MARCH 20, 1906.

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[Cablegram received March 20, 1906, 3.50 p. m.]

SECRETARY OF WAR, *Washington.*

Newspaper reports from Manila announcing wanton slaughter women and children at Mount Dajo extremely sensational and in all essential details false. The situation occupied by Moro outlaws on crater of volcano, 2,100 feet high, was exceedingly difficult and required great display of heroism on the part of Army, Navy, Filipino, and Moro constabulary, who rendered most valiant service. Some women and children were killed or wounded by preliminary shelling at distance. Moros were outlaws and fanatics and refused to surrender to the last, attempting repeatedly to murder our forces who were rescuing wounded Moros. Moro Sultan and leading datos rendered great assistance, and the surrounding population entirely in sympathy with the course taken to remove gang of cutthroats who were preying upon

community, retreating as occasion required to what they supposed to be impenetrable fastness.

There was no killing of anyone except such as was indispensable to end intolerable situation. Attack not ordered until every resource looking to the peaceable adjustment exhausted. Troops and officers deserving of highest praise.

IDE.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, March 20, 1906.*

SIR: I herewith inclose additional information of an official character which has come to this Department with reference to the recent engagement of American forces with Moro outlaws at Mount Dajo.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. TAFT,  
*Secretary of War.*

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, March 21, 1906.*

SIR: Having completed the duty for which you were ordered to this city, the Secretary of War directs, as necessary for the public service, that you return to the place of receipt by you of the telegram from this office dated March 19, 1906.

Very respectfully,

HENRY P. MCCAIN,  
*Military Secretary.*

Maj. HUGH L. SCOTT,  
*Fourteenth Cavalry, Washington, D. C.*

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[Cablegram.]

MANILA, *March 20, 1906.*

SECRETARY OF WAR, *Washington:*

Newspaper reports from Manila announcing wanton slaughter women and children at Mount Dajo extremely sensational and in all essential details false. The situation occupied by Moro outlaws on crater of volcano, 2,100 feet high, was exceedingly difficult and required great display of heroism on the part of Army, Navy, Filipino, and Moro constabulary, who rendered most valiant service. Some women and children were killed or wounded by preliminary shelling at distance. Moros were outlaws and fanatics and refused to surrender to the last, attempting repeatedly to murder our forces who were rescuing wounded Moros. Moro Sultan and leading datos rendered great assistance, and the surrounding population entirely in sympathy with the course taken to remove gang of cutthroats who were preying upon community, retreating as occasion required to what they supposed to be impenetrable fastness.

There was no killing of anyone except such as was indispensable to end intolerable situation. Attack not ordered until every resource looking to the peaceable adjustment exhausted. Troops and officers deserving of highest praise.

IDE.

I certify that the above is the only information received in this Bureau regarding the fight at Mount Dajo.

FRANK MCINTYRE,  
*Captain, Nineteenth United States Infantry,*  
*Acting Chief Bureau of Insular Affairs.*

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