



From Jose A. Flores, CSM (ret)
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This September 2, 2020 marks the 75th commemoration of the end of World War II. On September 2, 1945, the Japanese signed the surrender documents ending World War II on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. A war that took the lives of over 405,000 U.S. military personnel. The “Mighty Mo,” (USS Missouri) which now rests on the waters of Pearl Harbor, is a reminder of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in restoring peace to the world.



AN EXERPT FROM THE WWW.USSMISSOURI.ORG SUMMARIZES THIS DAY IN HISTORY as follows:

“On September 2, 1945, in Tokyo Bay aboard the USS Missouri, representatives of the Allied and Axis powers met in solemn ceremony to “conclude an agreement by which peace can be restored”. Following General Douglas MacArthur’s introductory speech, representatives of the Empire of Japan were directed to step forward and sign the two copies of the Instrument of Surrender. General MacArthur then signed on behalf of all the Allied powers followed by representatives of Allied nations in attendance. General MacArthur concluded the ceremony by saying: “Let us pray that peace be now restored to the world, and that God will preserve it always. These proceeding are closed!” With those words, World War II was over.



For those of our Greatest Generation, the significance of that moment coming after years of devastation and death could never be diminished or forgotten. It remains for us now to know and understand, to appreciate their service and sacrifice, and to always remember.

Pictured: Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu (middle right) signs the two copies of the Instrument of Surrender on behalf of the Emperor and the government of Japan while General Douglas MacArthur (middle left), his Chief of Staff, General Sutherland (far left), and Foreign Ministry Aide Toshikazu Kase witnesses the historic event (far right).



Most of the Veteran Corps members who served in World War II are no longer with us, but may we never forget those that made the ultimate sacrifice during this war and those that survived – As noted on the commemorative website **“we salute their service and honor the hope and peace they brought to a world at war.”** Let us all take a moment to reflect on their sacrifice and efforts as a sign of respect and honor.

Tom Fitzsimmons has provided a historical perspective highlighting the 165th (old 69th) Infantry involvement in WWII ... read on in his section.

The 165th had 198 soldiers who made the Ultimate Sacrifice and countless members wounded. The following two segments of this article will describe some of the heroic actions taken by members of the Regiment.

❖ **Medal of Honor: PFC Alejandro R. Ruiz**
Company A 1st BN 165th Infantry

When his unit was stopped by a skillfully camouflaged enemy pillbox, he displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. His squad was suddenly brought under a hail of machine gun fire and a vicious grenade attack and was pinned down. Jumping to his feet, PFC Ruiz seized an automatic rifle and lunged through the flying grenades and automatic rifle fire to the top of the embankment. When an enemy soldier charged him, Ruiz's rifle jammed. Undaunted, PFC Ruiz whaled on his assailant and clubbed him down. Then he ran back through the grenades and bullets and seized more ammunition and another automatic rifle and again made it back to the pillbox. Enemy fire now concentrated on him, but he charged on, miraculously reaching the position. He, in plain view, climbed to the top of the pillbox and leaped from one opening to another and sent a burst of fire into the pillbox, killing twelve of the enemy and completely destroying the pillbox. PFC Ruiz's heroic conduct, in the face of overwhelming odds, saved the lives of many comrades and eliminated an obstacle that would have checked his unit's advance.



PFC ALEJANDRO R. RUIZ

❖ **PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION - Company F, 2nd Bn 165th Inf**

Company F, 165th Infantry Regiment is cited for conspicuous valor and outstanding performance of a combat mission against Japanese Military Forces in the Okinawa Phase of the Nansei Shoto operation during the period 20-25 April 1945. On April 20th, during the drive south toward Machinato Airfield, Company F held an isolated position along the west coast. All supplies had to be brought by amphibious cargo carrier M29c (also known as the "weasel") for a distance of over 2000 yards, and it was necessary to evacuate the wounded in the same method. When tide conditions were unfavorable, rations had to be carried in and the wounded evacuated by hand for over 2000 yards. During the night of 20-21 April 1945, men not engaged on the outpost line voluntarily sacrificed their sleep in order to hand carry components of five antitank guns. On shore they re-assembled these guns in the darkness and used it against the enemy the following day with devastating effect.

On 24 April 1945, Company F was ordered to conduct a night attack on Mike Ridge, west of Gusukuma Village Okinawa. They ate a meal at 1700, filled their canteens and drew ammunition. This was the last food, water or ammunition they would have till the morning of 27 April 1945. At 1920, the enemy laid an intense artillery on the company's position, but at 2230 the attack was launched toward the ridge. It was shortly underway when the company ran headlong into a Japanese counterattack. This they beat off, reorganized, and at 25 April at 2000 launched another attack. Again they ran into a counterattack, which again they beat off. After engaging in a heavy firefight for a remainder of the night, the company assaulted at 1900 and took the ridge which four other companies had previously failed to capture in their turn. The company commander pushed his men to 40 yards of the impact area of his supporting artillery, whose axis of fire was parallel to his front line, and, by following the fire at that distance, placed his two assault platoons atop the ridge within 20 minutes. When they reached this point, there were only 31 men left in the two platoons and within 10 minutes, 5 of these were killed and 2

