

BORINQUEENERS CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ALLIANCE

*Hispanic Heritage
Spotlight on the
65th Infantry Regiment
Borinqueneers:*

Largest, longest standing, & only active-duty segregated Latino US military unit.

Fired first US military salvo of WWI.

Primarily Puerto Rican, in Korea the unit also included some Mexican-Americans, Virgin Islanders, African-Americans, Filipinos, & others.

Established in 1899 as the US Army's "Porto Rico" Regiment.

INSIDE THIS SPECIAL REPORT

Cannon fire from El Morro	2
Operation PORTREX	2
Heroes of Hungnam!	3
"Fijar Bayonetas!"	4
General Richard Cavazos	4
Don Modesto Cartagena	4
Congressional Gold Medal?	6

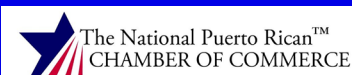
[Website](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

[YouTube Video](#)

[In The News](#)

National
Supporters:



The Borinqueneers

SPECIAL REPORT—CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE!

Mambo on Hill 167

**By Baltazar Soto, LTC, (Ret.)
US Army; Alliance Member**

This Korean War battle was officially named "Operation Red Rooster" by some officer in the regiment, but to 1LT Walt B. Clark and the men of his platoon, it will always be called "Mambo on Hill 167."

LT Clark was platoon leader of the 2nd Platoon, C Co., 1st BN, 65th INF "Borinqueneers," 3ID. He had recently graduated from the Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina and the Infantry Officer Basic Course. The young 21-year-old looked at his assignment as a challenge in leadership, since he was selected to lead these mostly Spanish-speaking soldiers from the tropical Puerto Rican and Virgin Islands. Many officers at the time thought it was the kiss of death to be assigned to the Puerto Rican Regiment. Critics called it the "seeexxy feeeeeth" mockingly imitating the Spanish accent of most of the regiment's Puerto Rican soldiers. It was considered by some in high command at the Pentagon and by some senior leaders as that "rum and coke" outfit. One general called it a regiment of "colored" troops, unreliable and inferior to continental "white" soldiers. But through two years of intense front line combat in the Korean War, the 65th Infantry Regiment proved all the critics wrong. Ever since Lt. Clark had first taken command of the 2nd Platoon in Mar 1952, he wanted to instill in his men aggressiveness,

Many officers at the time thought it was the kiss of death to be assigned to the Puerto Rican Regiment. Critics called it the "seeexxy feeeeeth" mockingly imitating the Spanish accent of most of the regiment's Puerto Rican soldiers.

"the spirit of the bayonet." He always had a kitchen grinding stone and had his men sharpen their 10 inch blades, insisting they have their bayonet on them at all times—the men even slept with their M-1 rifles with bayonets fixed.



After months of outpost duty, Clark and his platoon got the chance to attack. The mission was conceived on short notice. The orders were to "raid Chinese outpost positions on Hill 167 in stealth and darkness; ...

continued on page 3.

FACTS:

They executed the last regimental bayonet assault in US military history in 1951 during the Korean War.

Near Hungnam, they valiantly defended as rear-guard the retreating 1st Marine Division in one of the epic military withdrawals of history.

In Korea, they earned 2,771 Purple Hearts. 750 were killed in action & 100 are still missing in action.

The 1st & only Latino 4-Star Army general, a Mexican-American, got his start as a young Borinqueneer officer in Korea.

Learn more at
www.Borinqueneers.org



In support of

**H.R.1726
S.1174**



The
Borinqueneers
Congressional
Gold Medal Act

Ask your US lawmakers to Co-Sponsor the bills NOW!



Above, Lt. Col. Teófilo Marxuach ordered the first shots fired in World War I by the US.



SEE PAGE 6 FOR
MORE ON OUR
GREAT CAUSE!

Shown at right, a 65th Inf. Reg. recon patrol on March 6, 1950, during the Operation PORTREX military exercise.



Cannon fire from El Morro:

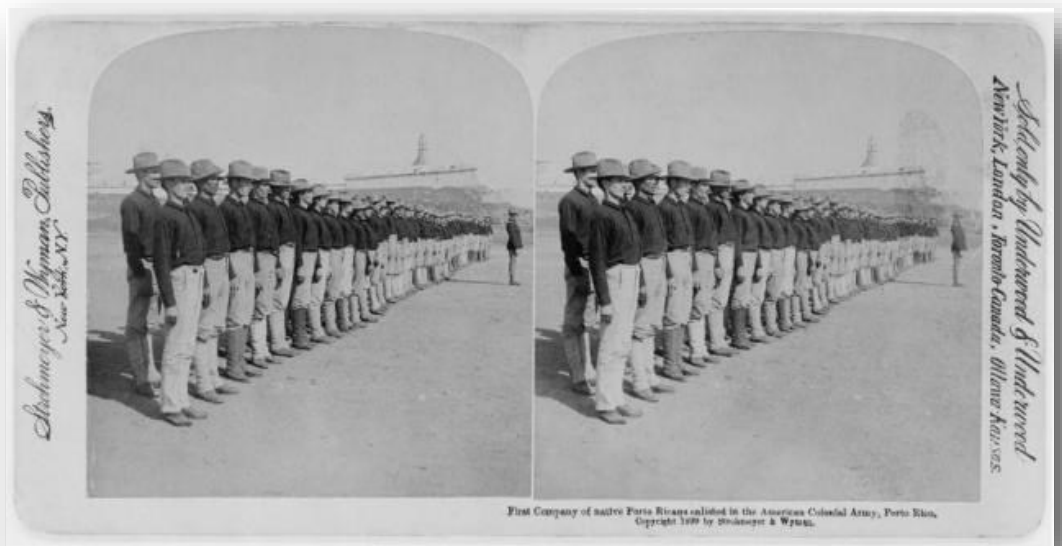
1st Salvo of World War I

The first shots of WWI in defense of freedom!

From "El Morro" fort, Old San Juan, early Borinqueneers fired on the armed German supply ship Oldenwald as it tried to force its way out of San Juan Bay to resupply German submarines in the Atlantic Ocean at the onset of WWI. The

Puerto Rican soldiers confiscated the ship which was later renamed

the SS Newport News, in US service until 1924.



Shown above from 1899: Caption reads "First Company of native Porto Ricans enlisted in the American Colonial Army, Porto Rico."

WWI, WWII, & Operation PORTREX

During WWI, the 65th Infantry Regiment Borinqueneers guarded the strategically important Panama Canal Zone. In WWII, the segregated unit guarded the canal again, and also saw action in Northern Africa and central Europe. In March 1950 on the eve of the Korean War, the Operation PORTREX mili-

tary exercise was held on the island of Vieques, where the Borinqueneers prevented more than 32,600 combat troops from the Army & Marines, aided by Naval & Air forces, from establishing a beachhead on the island. This victory helped establish the Borinqueneers' reputation as a potent fighting force.

Mambo on Hill 167, continued from page 1.



flag. Clark and the 2nd Platoon quickly found out what it meant. "Fire within the battle position!" The Chinese, with complete disregard for their own soldiers, fired mortar and

Photo at left: 2nd Platoon, C Co., 65th INF (LT Clark front row, seventh from left). "Arriba muchachos!"

capture prisoners; leave a squad of volunteers on 167 to observe Chinese Main Line of Resistance (MLR) area—squad to remain for 48 hours." Clark's unit was the assault platoon for the company, so it was his mission to go into the objective, seize the hill, and take the prisoners. POWs were needed for gathering intelligence on the enemy, and Third Division had taken no prisoners of war (POWs) in a number of weeks. C Co. Commander Capt. Henry E. Hutcheson told Clark that the S-2 (Intelligence) estimated "half an enemy squad" occupied the objective and assured him that his platoon would have no problem. The rest of the company would provide suppression, security, and support. A tank section on the MLR would provide support by fire. The plan sounded good, but when any plan is "executed" in a field environment during wartime, unpredictable obstacles—friction—can occur. After assembling in darkness on 18 Jul 1952 near the steep

slopes of Hill 250 along the Outpost Line of Resistance, C Co. moved out and crossed the Line of Departure (LD) at 2400 (thus, enemy contact would occur on 19 Jul), and quickly became lost in the dark. Noise discipline was poor, undoubtedly providing the enemy early warning. It was not until the sun began to rise that C Co. found the objective, negating the "stealth" part of the mission. Clark's 2nd Platoon began the assault from the north. Someone once said, "No plan survives contact with the enemy". C Co. had a plan, but so did the Chinese. The Chinese allowed 2nd Platoon scouts to move within a few feet of the objective before releasing a murderous fire with four Soviet Maxim Heavy Machine Guns, small arms, and grenades. All hell broke loose resulting in total chaos. The infantrymen instinctively threw themselves down to hug the earth for cover. A Chinese soldier on top of the hill signaled with a large red

artillery shells into their battle position as 2nd Platoon advanced. Clark knew he had to do something. He immediately charged into the enemy position leading his platoon of infantry with fixed bayonets shouting "Arriba muchachos!" Clark's platoon sergeant, MSG Santos Candelario helped to rally the rest of the platoon to follow their lieutenant.

Clark fearlessly led his men into a hill position of three concentric trench lines. Though wounded by an enemy grenade, he continued his charge, hurling grenades and shooting several enemy soldiers. Then he entered a trench and turned a corner, and came face to face with a Chinese soldier. Several things happened almost instantaneously. Both men raised their weapons and fired. Clark's M2 Carbine jammed, but the enemy's didn't, and a burst from a Soviet Model PPSH41 "Burp Gun" hit Clark in the thigh. ...

Continued on page 5.



**HISPANIC
HERITAGE
SPOTLIGHT ON
THE 65TH
INFANTRY
REGIMENT
BORINQUENEERS**

The 65th Inf. Reg. Borinqueneers: Heroes of Hungnam!

SEMPER FIDELIS & HONOR ET FIDELITAS: One of the pinnacle achievements of the Borinqueneers in Korea was when they rushed to the defense of the US Marines, 1st Division, and stayed behind to valiantly fight off the enemy after the Marines were encircled and

ordered to withdraw to Hungnam. After providing rear-guard cover of heroic proportions for the Marines, the operation culminated on Christmas Eve 1950 as the last Borinqueneers boarded ship. Hungnam is considered as one of the epic, successful withdrawals of military history.



At left: the last two US soldiers to board ship at Hungnam were Borinqueneers Cpl. Julio Guzman & Sgt. Major Lupercio Ortiz.

“Fijar Bayonetas!” (Fix Bayonets!)



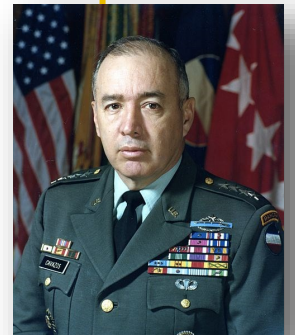
The Borinqueneers are credited with the last regimental bayonet assault in US military history. In early 1951 while fighting in Korea, two battalions of the 65th fixed bayonets and charged straight up hill toward the enemy, over running them and overtaking the enemy's strategic position. General Douglas MacArthur had high praise: *“The Puerto Ricans forming the ranks of the gallant 65th Infantry give daily proof on the battlefields of Korea of their courage, determination and resolute will to victory, their invincible loyalty to the United States and their fervent devotion to those immutable principles of human relations which the Americans of the Continent and of Puerto Rico have in common. They are writing a brilliant record of heroism in battle and I am indeed proud to have them under my command. I wish that we could count on many more like them.”*

1st & only Latino 4-Star General began as a Borinqueneer

The 1st and only Latino 4-Star Army general began his career as a young Borinqueneer officer in Korea. A Mexican-American, Richard E. Cavazos earned his first of two Distinguished Service Crosses while a Borinqueneer for his heroic actions during an attack on Hill 142. This award is our nation's 2nd high-

est medal for individual heroism. He also was awarded his 1st Silver Star and 1st Purple Heart as a Borinqueneer. The Puerto Rican soldiers in the segregated unit held him in high esteem and regarded him as a true soldiers' officer. Later, he attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the British Staff College and the Armed Forces Staff

College. In 1967, Cavazos commanded 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, in Vietnam. His valiant leadership of that unit in the attack at Loc Ninh earned him a second Distinguished Service Cross. After Vietnam, he served in various command capacities, and was awarded his fourth star in 1982, assuming command of the US Army Forces Command.



A Mexican-American, Gen. Cavazos got his start as a Borinqueneer!

Don Modesto Cartagena de Jesús

The most decorated Puerto Rican soldier in US history, a proud 65th Infantry Regiment "Borinqueneer", the late Sergeant First Class Don Modesto Cartagena de Jesús served in WWII & Korea.

He is a recipient of the nation's 2nd highest award for heroism, the Distinguished Service

Cross, as well as the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster and "V" device, the Purple Heart, and many others. Hailing from Cayey, Puerto Rico, he was very active in veterans affairs for many years following his renowned military service. Due to the language barrier and the often inadequate respect

for their heroic actions at the time, numerous Latino soldiers were under-recognized, and Don Modesto's Distinguished Service Cross citation reads more like a Congressional Medal of Honor citation, which he has merited. Learn more at

<http://www.Borinqueneers.org!>



SFC Modesto Cartagena

Mambo on Hill 167, continued from page 3.

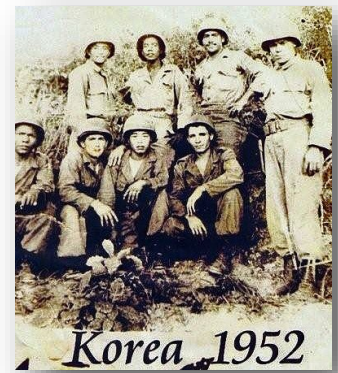
Clark threw his carbine away and instinctively jumped on the soldier. At the same time, he took his steel pot off and began beating the Chinese soldier senseless. When the soldier moved, Clark remembered he still had his Smith & Wesson 45 revolver and shot him. Other enemy soldiers nearby hurled grenades at Clark wounding him in the legs, knee, and face. Cpl. José Otero-González ran through the hail of fire, following Clark, firing his rifle, and throwing hand grenades at the Chinese. Near one of the enemy trenches, he found his platoon leader injured and stretched out on the ground. Otero told his lieutenant, "I'll save you." PFC Maximino Paoli, who had charged with Otero, was suddenly knocked down, wounded in the head. Clark thought he was dead, but Paoli jumped back up furious and bayoneted the two Chinese who were throwing grenades directly at Clark. Later Paoli discovered a bullet wedged in his helmet between the liner and the steel pot. Cpl. Otero spotted another 2nd Platoon NCO and rescued him, too. The intensity of the enemy fire was so severe; it did not allow the other two C Co. rifle platoons to the east to provide any support. The promised tank fire support from the MLR never materialized either. The 2nd Platoon was already intermingled with the Chinese on the hill, and the tanks could not risk firing into friendly forces. Except for a small attached rifle team, 2nd Platoon was on its own. Chinese bunkers were blown up by the 57mm recoilless rifle team or were directly

assaulted by the infantryman. As the brutal fight progressed for several hours, it became apparent that the alleged "half squad" of 3-4 enemy riflemen was a lot more, possibly an enemy Company of a hundred Soldiers. On its own and outnumbered at least two to one, 2nd Platoon still managed to chase the enemy from the position, then machine gun the Chinese who were running away back to their lines. Then Clark directed fire against outlying Chinese mortar positions. The 2nd Platoon succeeded in capturing two Chinese Prisoners in the gruesome melee. Perhaps the bravest man Clark witnessed that day was the medic attached to his platoon, PFC Demetrio Villalobos-Melendez. With all the death and maiming going on in the bloody brawl, he calmly saved lives, attended the wounded and moved through enemy fire. Clark and his platoon of Puerto Rican infantry owned Hill 167 until they received orders to withdraw from the position. Refusing medical aid and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, Clark moved through the heavy hostile fire assisting in the evacuation of the wounded. During the withdrawal, the POWs were killed by the intense Chinese fire. Clark was the last platoon member to leave the enemy position. The platoon had taken all their wounded and dead back with them, including the upper half of one of its soldiers. No platoon member living or dead was left behind. During the platoon's withdrawal to the MLR, the Chinese fired an estimated 3,000 rounds of

mortar and artillery. Clark was unable to keep up with his men since he was severely wounded and since he was the last to leave the objective. During his lonely walk back, he was lifted off the ground three times by the 122mm mortar shelling along the withdrawal route. Miraculously, he finally reached the Battalion Aid Station at approximately 1100 hours. As 2nd Platoon neared the MLR, other soldiers including Capt. Enrique A. Vicéns, risked their lives to run to the aid the wounded C Co. First Sergeant MSG Rafael E. Balzac also assisted in evacuating a wounded comrade. Upon reaching friendly positions, he refused medical aid for his own wounds, and after calling for volunteers to accompany him, returned to help evacuate more wounded. As he was carrying a fallen comrade on his shoulders to safety, a devastating barrage of enemy mortar fire swept the entire area, killing him instantly. His body was not recovered until a couple of days after the battle. The casualty rate for 2nd Platoon was 50% with 7 killed and 24 wounded.

The Borinqueneers gave a special name to Hill 167: Mambo 167. Mambo was a very popular Latin music and dance that swept the Latin world in the early 1950s; when the men of the 65th were going to "rumble" in combat, they referred to it as "going to the Mambo." Clark learned about the name while in the hospital recovering from his wounds; it was months before he recovered. ...

Conclusion on page 6.



Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal Alliance

www.Borinqueneers.org

[Website](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

[YouTube Video](#)

[In the News!](#)

[US House H.R.1726 Co-Sponsor Countdown](#)

[US Senate S.1174 Co-Sponsor Countdown](#)

[Email our National Chair](#)

[Executive Sponsor:](#)

[You Are Strong! Center on Veterans Health
and Human Services](#)

Segregated Latino-American military unit seeks national recognition: Borinqueneers begin fall campaign for Co-Sponsors in U.S. Congress!

Similar in nature to the famed Tuskegee Airmen and other segregated U.S. military units, the **65th Infantry Regiment Borinqueneers** were the largest, longest-standing, and only active-duty **segregated** Latino military unit in U.S. history. Like the Tuskegee Airmen, Navajo Code Talkers, Nisei Soldiers, and Montford Point Marines who've already been recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal, the Borinqueneers overwhelmingly distinguished themselves in battle all the while enduring the **additional hardships of segregation and discrimination**. Hailing from Puerto Rico, the US Army unit was active from 1899-1959. The youngest of these remaining Latino-American heroes are in their 80's and 90's, having served in the Korean War. A nationwide, non-partisan, all-volunteer group, the **Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal Alliance** has been advocating the awarding of the **Congressional Gold Medal** to these elderly veterans since late last year. Made up of veterans, Latino-Americans, and like-minded patriots, the organization has worked closely with members of the U.S. Congress to facilitate the successful introduction and subsequent support of special bipartisan legislation, which requires Co-Sponsorship by two-thirds of each chamber for passage. The U.S. House of Representatives bill, introduced this spring by Representatives Pedro Pierluisi (D-PR) and Bill Posey (R-FL), **H.R.1726**, currently has 100 of the required 290 Co-Sponsors. The U.S. Senate bill, **S.1174**, introduced in June by Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), has 18 of the necessary 67 Co-Sponsors. **You can help by asking your 1 US House of Rep's member & 2 US Senators to become Co-Sponsors of the bills NOW!**

Mambo on Hill 167, continued from page 5.

Clark was awarded the Silver Star and two purple hearts for six separate grenade wounds and the bullet wound he received. First Sergeant Balzac was posthumously awarded the Silver Star and Capt. Vicéns, Cpl. Otero and PFC Villalobos-Melendez received the Bronze Star. Two Silver Stars and nine Bronze Stars were awarded that day, most to the soldiers of 2nd Platoon. The Puerto Rican soldiers had shown what they could do with good leadership. Despite being outnumbered and out-gunned, these fierce warriors won the day against a heavily armed and entrenched enemy force that outnumbered them two-to-one. Today Hill 167 is deep inside the Demilitarized Zone near North Korea, but Borinqueneers will never forget their Mambo 167.

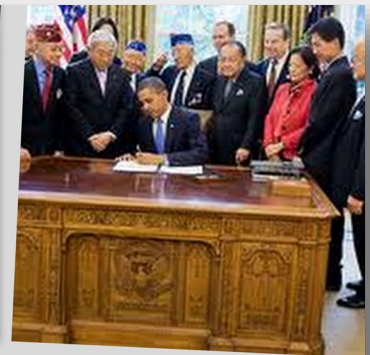
LTC Baltazar (Bart) Soto is a 1976 ROTC graduate of the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico. He serves on the Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal Alliance national steering committee.



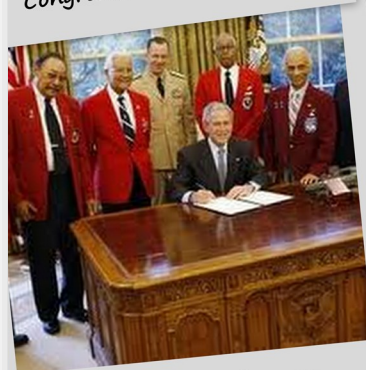
Montford Point Marines
Congressional Gold Medal



Navajo Code Talkers
Congressional Gold Medal



Nisei Soldiers
Congressional Gold Medal



Tuskegee Airmen
Congressional Gold Medal



65th Inf. Reg.
Borinqueneers???

In
support
of
**H.R.1726
&
S.1174**

www.Borinqueneers.org
[www.facebook.com/
BorinqueneersCGMAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/BorinqueneersCGMAlliance)



The Borinqueneers
Congressional Gold
Medal Act