

sion crater. This phase lasted from 0211H to 0325H, September 28.

b) A paroxysmal phase from 0325H to 0930H of the same day characterized by violent explosions that sand blasted everything within a kilometer radius of the new crater.

c) An intermediate phase characterized by mild steam explosions every five to ten minutes. This phase lasted up to 0600H of September 30.

d) A final cone-building phase which lasted from 0600H to 1550H September 30.

4. The September 1965 eruption of Taal may be described as a moderately violent phreatic eruption.

5. The total casualties of the eruption was 190 persons including those reported as missing. The causes of death were: direct blast effects, suffocation and drowning.

6. The barrios of Asas-as and Puland-bato of Volcano Island were completely devastated, while the barrios of Kalawit in Volcano Island and the lake-shore barrios of Boso-boso, Banyaga, Bilibinwang and part of Subic to the west of Volcano Island were seriously affected by the eruption.

7. The eruption covered an area about 60 square kilometers with a blanket of ash more than 25 centimeters thick.

8. Accretuinary lapill; are abundant, extending to about 5 kilometers from the explosion crater.

9. Juvenile material ejected was insignificant. What there was is basaltic in composition, with phenocrysts of olcine, lavradorite and clinopyroene.

10. The old crater lake was not affected significantly by the eruption.

Quite as naturally, non-scientific reports stressed the sensational and tragic aspects of the same happening and the sudden and violent nature of it contributed to distortion and misunderstanding.

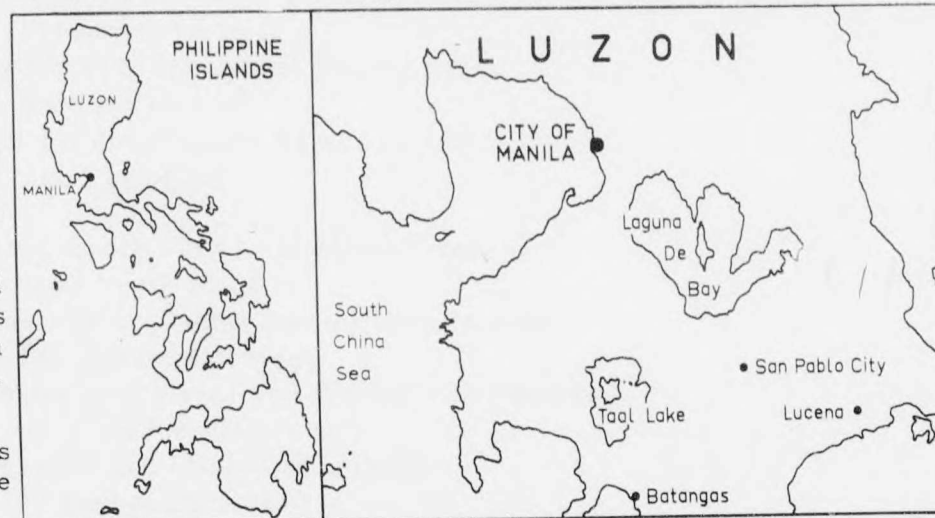
The violence to people and property occurred essentially within a six hour period on the early morning of September 28, and in the confusion of that dawn it is understandable that casualty figures should have been exaggerated.

Survivors made their way from the devastated area by whatever means were at hand, and it was several days before accurate figures could be compiled. In this vacuum of information estimates of human casualties rose to the thousands and these reports themselves tended to increase fear and uncertainty as members of families rushed hither and yon checking for relatives and friends.

The position of officials of the commission on Volcanology was not an enviable one following the

eruption. As they tried to assess the actual damage and collect data while evidence was still fresh, they were assailed from all sides for public statements and information. "Why hadn't more warning of the eruption been given? What was the actual damage? When would another occur? Would there be warning of the next? What was necessary to provide accurate warning? The sense of urgency that motivated questions of this nature by public officials, reporters, and others was compounded by the more immediate interest of the local inhabitants of the island and the affected shoreline in searching for missing members of their families and salvaging what remained of their possessions. For those evacuated from nearby unaffected areas, there was anxiety for ripe crops and unaccounted for livestock upon which their livelihood depended.

It is greatly to the credit of the officers and men of the Commission on Volcanology that they immediately proceeded to seek all available scientific information that could be of later use in prediction, while at the same time sympathetically answering the vast and varied demands placed on them. Geologists, accustomed to dealing with inanimate phenomena, are seldom required to directly translate their geological knowledge into the immediacy of highly emotional, human affairs.



Following the brief, destructive eruption just described, Taal became quiet again save for the photographers, scientific observers, curiosity seekers and others who visited the island and surveyed the damage. However, although the new crater itself was peaceful, the effects of its violence were evident. Roughly one-half of the verdant, fertile island now had a desert appearance with only stark reminders of the lush vegetation it once supported. Carcasses of cattle that had made their way to the shore and almost survived the night of horror bore bleak testimony to the recent disaster. More poignant still were oddments of those pleasant aspects of rural Filipino life now buried beneath a thick cover of ash; a home-made fiesta decoration, a child's school book, preserved by some freak of fate as colorful momentos in their now desolate surroundings. Rolled mats of grass in the local bancas plying to and from the island and requiring two