

Source: New York Times, 28 December 1941.

General Douglas MacArthur  
Commander in Chief United States Army Forces in the Far East

MACARTHUR'S DEFENSE OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE  
PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES PRESS

by  
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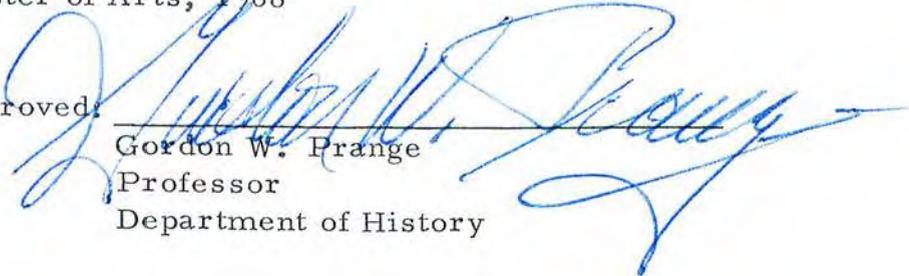
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## ABSTRACT

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Anthony Masi, Master of Arts, 1968

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When war exploded over the Pacific on 7 December 1941, the average American knew little of the Pacific world and its peoples. Although tension in the Pacific between the United States and Japan had heightened during the summer and fall of 1941, few Americans, including the press, envisioned a shooting war between the two disputants. While diplomatic messages continued through official channels, including a personal message from President Roosevelt to Emperor Hirohito, the American public was shocked into reality by the stunning news that Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.

Although momentarily shaken out of its complacency, the American public and some of the press, for the most part, believed that Japan could be defeated in a short time. But within a month this view had to be rejected, for suddenly, in quick succession, America suffered the humiliating loss of Manila, of Cavite, our largest naval base in the Philippines, and the island of Luzon. The one exception was

Bataan where MacArthur's forces had dug in for a heroic stand against the enemy.

The magnificent defense of Bataan by MacArthur and his beleaguered and outnumbered forces provided a ray of hope in an otherwise sad story of defeats during the early months of the Pacific war. The whole country took the general and his men unto their hearts. While the editorials of almost all the newspapers viewed MacArthur's defense of the Philippines as gallant throughout, they had serious misgivings about administration leadership and were highly critical of its conduct of the war in the Pacific.

When the Allied cause in the Pacific reached a new low in February, the American press began to demand that MacArthur be ordered out of the Philippines to lead a unified Allied effort in the Pacific. When the administration failed to act and sent troops to Great Britain instead, the editorials of the American press became very critical. And when Bataan and Corregidor fell the editorial denunciations against the administration reached new heights.

This thesis is a study of how the United States press viewed, analyzed, and reported the epochal events in the Philippines during the period 8 December 1941 to 8 May 1942. It examines the military plans and the political and national factors that had great significance for MacArthur's defense of the Philippines as well as the Allied efforts in the Pacific to halt the Japanese juggernaut. This work is based on the interpretation of information gathered primarily from about sixty-five

newspapers, from examination of other source material pertinent to the subject, and from several personal interviews.

## Acknowledgment

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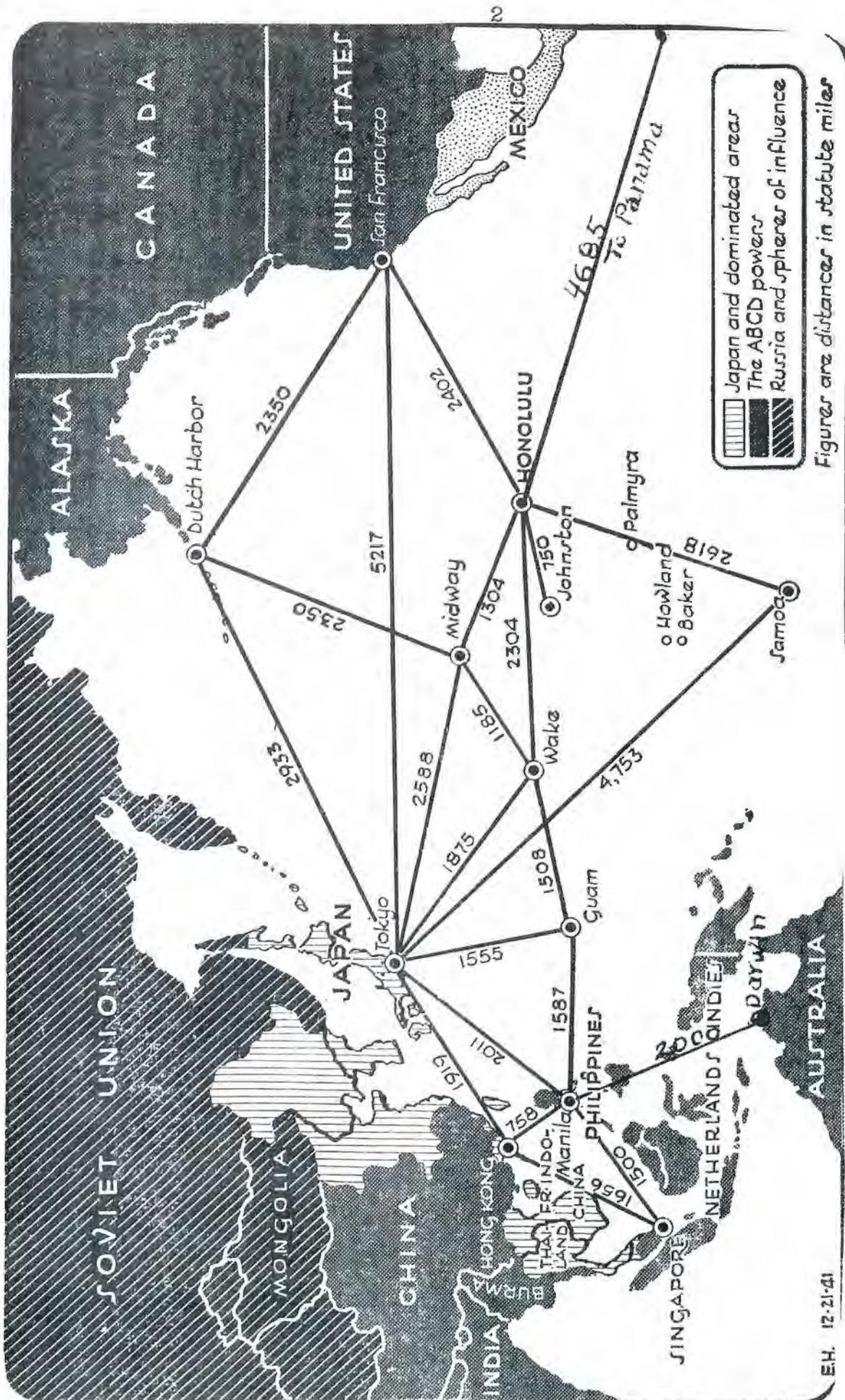
## CHAPTER I

### THE PACIFIC WORLD IN BRIEF PERSPECTIVE

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and on the military installations in the Philippines caught the United States and the military commanders in each of these areas by surprise. Japan's actions precipitated the Pacific War and made the United States an active partner of the Allied cause against the three Axis nations, Japan, Germany and Italy.

It would be difficult to understand General Douglas MacArthur's defense of the Philippines during the first few months of the Pacific War without some mention of the Pacific Ocean. A word or two is also necessary concerning the Philippines, Japan and the United States. Nor can one omit some comments on MacArthur himself.

The Pacific Ocean, which is about 500,000,000 million years old and contains almost one half of the water area of the world, is twenty times the size of the United States. At its widest part, between Panama and the coast of Indo-China, it is about 12,000 miles. The distance from San Francisco to Manila is about 7,500 miles. To those responsible for planning and conducting warfare or transporting men and material on, over, or under the surface of its vast expanse, the



Source: New York Times, 21 December 1941.

MAP 1

Comparative Distances from Tokyo and San Francisco

Pacific represents a nightmare (Map 1).

One of the largest and most significant of all archipelagos in the Pacific is the Philippines which is composed of about 7,100 islands. It has a land area of nearly 115,707 square miles and extends 4 degrees to 20 degrees north latitude for a distance of 1,150 miles. In 1941 its population was approximately 16,500,000.<sup>1</sup> Because of its location in the geographic heart of the Far East, it was a prerequisite for Japan's successful march to the south. It was one of the vital points the Japanese had to neutralize before she could successfully invade the oil rich Netherlands Indies. Possession of this strategically important archipelago would lessen the danger of a flank attack by United States forces in the Philippines against the Japanese as they moved southward.

Once under the power of Spain, the Philippines were claimed by the United States at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. America's refusal to grant immediate independence--a cause she had embraced--to the Filipinos sparked an insurrection led by Emilio Aguinaldo who had helped the Americans to capture Manila. This decision made the United States a colonial power in the Far East with the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and the "status quo" in that part of the world.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fairfield Osborn, (ed.) The Pacific World, (New York: Norton and Co., Inc., 1944), p. 113.

<sup>2</sup>Louis Morton, The Fall of the Philippines, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 3. Hereinafter cited as Morton, Philippines.

The Filipinos progressed so rapidly under American tutelage that by 1916 they had almost complete control of their domestic affairs. In 1934 Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act which provided for the independence of the Philippines on 4 July 1946. This action was fully indorsed by the United States War Department which had looked upon the Philippines, "located as they were in waters dominated by the Japanese forces,"<sup>1</sup> as a liability.

In 1935 the Philippines Commonwealth elected Manuel Quezon as its first president. Although the Filipinos were considered politically mature and strong enough economically to take over the responsibility of their government, they had no qualified military leader to organize and lead the defense of the islands. In search of such a person, Mr. Quezon convinced General Douglas MacArthur, then United States Army Chief of Staff, to accept the position as head of the Philippine defense organization. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's approval paved the way for his transfer to the Philippines as a military adviser.

When President Quezon invited MacArthur to take over the top defensive military post in the Philippine armed forces, his was a name well known in the islands. The name was first introduced there by his father, General Arthur MacArthur. It is with the father that the MacArthur legend begins there. During the Philippine insurrection he commanded the American troops in the islands. His kindly treatment of

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Tribune, 27 December 1941, p. 10.

Aguinaldo and his followers and of the Filipinos gave the MacArthur name special meaning in the Philippines and was repaid forty years later in loyalty and devotion to his son. Both MacArthurs had a breadth of feeling for the individual that made them capable of compassion for the Asian--particularly the Filipino.

MacArthur was born at Fort Dodge, an army post in Arkansas, on 26 January 1880. His paternal ancestors, prominent in Scotland's history for over a thousand years, fought with Robert the Bruce for Scottish independence. A Scottish proverb states: "There is nothing older--unless the hills--MacArtair and the devil."<sup>1</sup> He entered West Point in 1899 and graduated at the head of his class in 1903. Upon graduation, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, Engineer Corps, and sent to the Philippines. This was the first of his three tours of duty to the islands which he came to know so intimately. As one American newspaper said: "He knew the Filipinos from the cabinet members to the cocheros who drove the little carromatas."<sup>2</sup>

During his long and distinguished career he served eight presidents, beginning with President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903 and ending with his dismissal by Harry S. Truman in 1951. His exploits and coolness while under enemy fire in World War I became legendary. His ability to organize and lead under adverse battle conditions won for him

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<sup>1</sup>Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. Inc., 1964), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Dallas Morning News, 3 March 1942, p. 7.

a rapid promotion to the rank of brigadier general, one of the youngest in the American Expeditionary Forces. An index to his leadership during World War I is shown in a commendation from his Corps Commander, General Charles P. Summerall, which read:

. . . General Douglas MacArthur has manifested the highest soldierly qualities and has rendered services of the greatest valor. . . . During this advance the enemy fought and resorted to hand-to-hand combat. . . . For his leadership during three days of combat, I am happy to recommend to you for the second time that he be made a Major General.<sup>1</sup>

From 1919 to 1922 he served as Superintendent of West Point, the youngest man to hold that position. In 1931 he was appointed by President Herbert Hoover to be the United States Army Chief of Staff and thus became the youngest living four-star general. One of his most agonizing duties was to drive the Bonus Marchers of 1932 out of Washington. His actions aroused a deep abiding bitterness in the hearts of many Americans. In 1934 his term as Chief of Staff was extended for one year by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the first Chief of Staff so honored. In 1935 he departed from the United States to take up his new duties in the Philippines. His small staff included Major Dwight D. Eisenhower, later General and President.

On 24 August 1936 he accepted the rank of Field Marshal and the baton which symbolized its rank. His speech, following the presentation, was headlined in the Manila Tribune on 25 August "PREPARE

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<sup>1</sup>Frazier Hunt, The Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1964, p. 88. MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 67.

OR PERISH--MACARTHUR." The speech was intended as an appeal to the Filipinos to develop their own defense or die. Eisenhower, who was at the presentation, disapproved of MacArthur's acceptance and looked upon the title of Field Marshal as having certain comic overtones.<sup>1</sup> Eisenhower's opinion was shared by a few of the American columnists who had a field day with such epithets as the "Napoleon of Luzon."<sup>2</sup> By accepting the unprecedented rank of Field Marshal, he became the first American citizen so honored.

On 30 April 1937, MacArthur married Miss Jean Faircloth in a civil marriage ceremony in New York City.<sup>3</sup> This was his second marriage. His first marriage to the socialite Louise Cromwell of Baltimore in 1922, which ended in divorce in 1929, was headlined as the "Marriage of Mars and Millions."<sup>4</sup> In his sixtieth year, MacArthur was blessed with a son, the only child born of the two marriages.

From 1935 to 1941 he carried out his plan to organize and train the Philippine Army. His two goals were to train 400,000 men by 1946 and to change the Philippines from a tempting prize for the Japanese to a rugged fortress they would hesitate to attack. He achieved neither goal.

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<sup>1</sup>Bob Considine, General Douglas MacArthur, (Greenwich: Fawcett Inc., 1964), p. 60.

<sup>2</sup>Dallas Morning News, 3 March 1942, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup>Denver Post, 23 February 1942, p. 1.

The Japanese, a hardy, industrious and vigorous race, emerged from the cocoon of their isolation when Commodore Mathew Perry opened her door in 1853. Unlike China, however, Japan did not wait to be dissected by the Western Powers. Her modernization, a consequence of her adapting western technology and institutions to suit her needs, was one of the amazing phenomena of modern history. Out of this readiness to seize new methods and new ideas there soon emerged an aggressive and expansionist foreign policy to serve her own militant ends.

In 1895 Japan defeated China and extended her influence to the Asian mainland, thus becoming an Asiatic power. Her decisive military victory over Russia in 1905, made her the first Oriental nation to defeat a Western nation. By 1910, when Japan annexed Korea, she was accepted as an emerging world power.

Out of the victory over Russia in 1905 there developed, within a small group of militarists, an animosity toward the United States. Highly dissatisfied with the Treaty of Portsmouth of September 1905, the militarists were convinced that Japan had been denied the full fruits of victory because of America's involvement in the peace talks. This small and then seemingly innocuous animosity, which began during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, increased over the years. A long series of misjudgments and misunderstandings finally culminated in the dramatic events of December 1941.

During World War I, Japan seized the former German islands of the Marianas, the Caroline and the Marshalls. Although she officially

resigned from the League of Nations on 27 March 1933, Japan was allowed, with the sanction of the Council of the League, to continue her mandate over the islands she held.<sup>1</sup> This action had far reaching effect in the early 1940's for they provided her with a fortified screen and points for attacks against the United States forces in the Pacific.

The decades of the "twenties" and "thirties" in Japan were years of bitter internal strifes between the military, who had ambitious schemes of expansion by force, and the important industrial families which, taking the United States as a model, prospered on international trade.<sup>2</sup> The industrialists, however, were no match for the Army whose minister could go over the head of the Premier to consult with the Emperor. Of greater personal importance to a dissident minister was the system of patriotic assassinations which the militarists had developed.<sup>3</sup>

In 1941, Japan, taking advantage of events in Europe, pursued with greater vigor her expansionist policy in China and Southeast Asia-- particularly Indo-China. Her rapid expansion and her desire to create a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere alarmed the United States and Great Britain. In order to restrain the Japanese, President

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<sup>1</sup>Meribeth E. Cameron, et. al. China, Japan and the Powers, (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1952), p. 408.

<sup>2</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, 9 December 1941, Part 3, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>See in particular, Hugh Byas, Government by Assassination, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942).

Roosevelt in mid-1941 froze all Japanese assets in the United States and placed an embargo on all oil shipments to Japan. With the latter measure, Roosevelt had struck at Japan's most sensitive spot. Oil was the life blood of her economy, particularly of her vast war machine. Without it she could not continue her program of expansion for long. In fact if her supply became too low she could not even go to war.

By October 1941, Japan had only enough oil to carry on armed conflict for eighteen months. She was desperate. That month, political pressure from the militarists and the extreme nationalists forced Prince Fumimaro Konoye, the Prime Minister, whom they considered ineffectual, to resign. He was replaced by the dynamic and stubborn militarist General Hedeki Tojo. With Tojo and the militarists in power, civil Government was virtually nonexistent.<sup>1</sup>

As the political crisis intensified during November, the demands of both countries became more difficult to reconcile. On 26 November Secretary of State Cordell Hull sent a strong note to the Japanese Government. The two Japanese envoys, Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura and Saburo Kurusu, after reading the note, were aghast, and saw it as an ultimatum which Japan could not accept without humiliation. They predicted that when it was received in Tokyo the officials would more than likely throw up their hands. The note was rejected outright on 27 November.

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<sup>1</sup>For an excellent biography of Tojo see Robert J. C. Butow, Tojo and the Coming of the War, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

Then Roosevelt, in a dramatic climax to the exchange of diplomatic notes, sent a personal message to the Japanese Emperor Hirohito on 6 December. Japan's stunning and shocking answer came the next day, at daybreak over Hawaii.

Even while the diplomatic exchange was going on, Japan had already made the fateful decision to go to war.<sup>1</sup> Her invasion fleet was steaming out of the North Pacific for Pearl Harbor. On the morning of 7 December (8th, Philippine time), the militarists efforts were crowned with success. With the words "To-To-To"<sup>2</sup> signaling the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japan ended eighty-eight years of friendship with the United States and set the Pacific world afire. Yet, President Roosevelt's foreign policy was not without provocation. Official Washington could also take what satisfaction it wanted from the fact that it had desired and to a degree maneuvered the Japanese to fire the first shot. Roosevelt had insisted on this point because of his fear that if the United States struck the first blow the country would remain divided.<sup>3</sup>

Pearl Harbor was by no means an unmitigated disaster for the Americans. Neither could it be considered a complete success for the Japanese. However, they gained several advantages by their initial

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<sup>1</sup>See Louis Morton, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years, (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

<sup>2</sup>Gordon W. Prange, "Tora, Tora, Tora," Reader's Digest, October-November 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Pierre S. R. Payne, The Marshall Story, (New York: Prentice Hall, 1951), p. 160.

success at Hawaii. For they made it virtually impossible for the United States to reinforce the Philippines without extensive losses in men and material. The suddenness of the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor caught the Philippines short of their military goals.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ANTAGONISTS--PLAN--STRATEGY--ATTACK

The ten years that MacArthur had counted on to create a modern Philippine Army of ten divisions, which could defend the islands from attack, was cut in half. In these five years the results were excruciatingly slow and painfully disappointing. The citizen-soldier system of conscription, under which MacArthur trained the Filipinos, was similar to that of Switzerland. The Filipinos would train for a few months and then go back to their jobs. Some American newsmen who visited the islands and observed their training labeled them, "two for a nickel" soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

As the war clouds darkened and tension in the Pacific grew, MacArthur was recalled to active duty by Washington and made the commander of the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE). MacArthur, with the cooperation of Washington, made an eleventh-hour attempt to shore up the lagging defensive posture of the Philippines before the storm broke. The attempt fell short of its mark. Neither the Philippines nor the United States were prepared to face the Japanese

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<sup>1</sup>Dallas Morning News, 3 March 1942, p. 7.

when hostilities began in December. Japan's spectacular success in the Philippines, then can be attributed as much to MacArthur's and America's unreadiness as to the speed and superiority of Japanese tactics, troops and equipment.

The main reasons for MacArthur's failure to repel the Japanese from Philippine shores can be credited for the most part to opposing military views and policies, lack of appropriations, lack of time, the dilatory action of the Navy, and to MacArthur's own misjudgment. The military controversy was centered mostly in the various plans that had evolved over the years on how to fight Japan, particularly in the Philippines.

In 1924, a joint Army-Navy Board suddenly recognized the strategic value of the Philippines in the event of a war with Japan. Out of this recognition there evolved the various Orange plans that became the basic principle for war in the Pacific. The first Orange plan called for the Navy to take the offensive and destroy the Japanese fleet, and keep the communication lines open to the Philippines. The Army, in the meantime, was assigned the mission of defending Manila Bay.

In 1938 the plan was revised to make the Navy's move across the Pacific a progressive and defensive one rather than a sustained offensive drive. The inherent weakness of this plan was its failure to set a time limit for the Navy's advance across the Pacific. The Army in turn would still defend Manila Bay; however, no provisions were made to send men and munitions to supply or to reinforce the defenders.

For all practical purposes it was a compromise plan being neither defensive or offensive. While Congress would not abandon the Philippines, neither would it grant adequate funds for its defense.

The latest revision of the Orange Plan came in 1941 when it was designated as War Plan Orange No. 3 (WPO-3).<sup>1</sup> This plan had all the features of the 1938 plan, and retained almost the same basic mission. Military action under the WPO-3 was limited to central Luzon. If this were not possible then the defending troops were to withdraw into Bataan for a last ditch fight to the end. The plan left many things unsaid. For example, no provisions were made as to what action would be taken after the fall of Bataan. The plan did, however, authorize the stockpiling of 180 days of supplies for 40,000 men.<sup>2</sup>

In October 1941 the Rainbow-5 plan was introduced. This plan, prepared with the cooperation of Great Britain, was world-wide in scope and stressed defensive action in the Pacific in the event of global war. The basic mission of the Army and the Navy was the same but implicit in the plan was the loss of the Philippines. The planners, for the most part, were convinced that no system of fortifications and no amount of patrolling the extensive coastline of the Philippines could assure an absolute defense against Japan. With the exception of some

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 61. Morton regards this plan as strategically unsound and outdated by 1941 but tactically sound for local conditions. Japan's blow on Pearl Harbor had rendered the plan obsolete.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 63.

changes and a few individual efforts, little had been done by the United States Government to prepare the Philippines for an extensive war with Japan.

MacArthur's position was not an enviable one. When he assumed command of USAFFE in July 1941 his total troop strength was 10,473. Included in this force were 2,547 Americans and 7,936 Filipinos. His air force was no more than a token force, unable to fight against "even a mildly determined and ill-equipped foe."<sup>1</sup> Individual and organizational equipment was lacking, and what armament there was, was mostly of the World War I type. Military transportation was practically nonexistent. Large-scale troop movements were dependent on buses and trucks contracted from civilians. During the summer and fall of 1941 he carried out a strong campaign to accelerate the pace of the flow of men and munitions from the United States to the Philippines. During this period he also voiced strong objections to the existing war plans.

MacArthur firmly opposed both the WPO-3 and the Rainbow-5 plans. He viewed them as being defensive and defeatist in nature. However, it was not until the Rainbow-5 plan was introduced in October that he had an opportunity to forcefully press for the adoption of his own plan. The plan he proposed was aggressive and offensive in nature and was designed to deny the surrounding waters to a hostile fleet and to

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<sup>1</sup>Wesley F. Craven and James L. Cate, eds. The Army Air Force in World War II, Vol. I, (Chicago: The University Press of Chicago, 1948), p. 177. Hereinafter cited as Craven, Army Air Force.

provide maximum defense of the beaches. The keystone of this plan was a formidable force of heavy bombers and fighters which he hoped to use against Japanese communication lines and against any Japanese landing force.

In a strongly worded letter to the War Department, he warned that an enemy landing on any southern Philippine island would compromise the defense of Manila Bay or Luzon.<sup>1</sup> Yet MacArthur's plan had no positive solution in meeting such a situation when it did occur. The Philippine coastline, longer than that of the United States, could not be patrolled effectively by Admiral Thomas C. Hart's Asiatic Fleet, let alone by MacArthur's small fleet of mosquito boats. In view of the impending war in the Pacific, MacArthur's plan was approved. Washington's new policy involved a sharp revision of its previous attitude.

MacArthur's impatience drove him to commit one of his few military blunders. Without waiting for the necessary men and material, he put his plan into operation.<sup>2</sup> This action was partly motivated by his arrogant optimism and by his firm belief that war would not come until April 1942.<sup>3</sup> By then he hoped that all the necessary reinforcements--trained officers, competent specialists, trucks, tanks, etc.,--would

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<sup>1</sup>Ltr. MacArthur to TAG, 1 Oct 41, subj: Opns Plan Rainbow-5, WPD 4178-18. Quoted in Morton, Philippines, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>This plan was put into effect on 3 December and was the one in use when war broke out. It was dropped on 23 December.

<sup>3</sup>Richard H. Rovere and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., The MacArthur Controversy and American Foreign Policy, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), p. 49.

have been received from the United States. MacArthur's character was such that at times he could not separate reality from fantasy. By his action, he compromised the important logistics feature of the WPO-3. This error would have tragic consequences in the defense of Bataan and can be said to be one of the most important factors for its eventual fall.

During November men and munitions began to arrive in increasing numbers. However, because of the lack of ships, the shipments were made in small increments. By 1 December, the forces in the Philippines, while still inadequate, had been considerably strengthened. MacArthur's forces now numbered 31,095 and consisted of 19,107 Americans and 11,988 Filipinos. The increase in American strength was due to the great influx of Air Corps and Service Detachment personnel. On 3 December he confirmed the mission of the four major tactical commands which he had established on 4 November. The commands were the Northern Luzon Force, the Southern Luzon Force, the Visayan-Mindanao Force and a Reserve Force. These forces were commanded by Maj. General Jonathan M. Wainright, Brig. General George M. Parker, Jr., and Brig. General William F. Sharp respectively. The Reserve Force was under the control of MacArthur's headquarters.

Plans were made to phase in additional troops as they became available from local resources or the States. By 15 December most Filipino trainees and units had been assigned to the ten reserve Philippine divisions which were increased to about 110,000 men. Although

poorly trained and ill-equipped, they represented a military force of some size.<sup>1</sup> Of the 110,000 Filipino troops inducted into service on 19 December about 50,000 were on Luzon while the balance was distributed on the other major islands of the archipelago.<sup>2</sup>

By 8 December MacArthur's air force, around which centers the greatest controversy of the Philippine defense, numbered 307 planes of varying size, type and condition. The strength of this force was concentrated on thirty-five B-17's and one hundred and seven P-40's. There had been a progressive increase of planes since the middle of August. With this sudden increase and with promises of more to come, MacArthur requested that Maj. General Lewis Brereton be assigned to his command as commander of the new expanding Far East Air Force. The request was approved by Washington and Brereton was subsequently assigned to the Philippines.

Rounding out the picture of the military units in the Philippines was the U. S. Asiatic Fleet under the command of Admiral Thomas C. Hart. Included in his forces were three cruisers, thirteen destroyers, eighteen submarines, six P. T. boats, thirty-three seaplanes, one tender and one drydock. These then were the forces and the leaders whom the Japanese would attack.

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<sup>1</sup>Carlos Romulo, I Saw the Fall of the Philippines, (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 1943), p. 55.

<sup>2</sup>Charles A. Willoughby and John Chamberlain, MacArthur; 1941-1951, (New York: McGraw and Hill, 1954), p. 21.

While MacArthur tried to improve his plan, the authorities in Washington worked frantically establishing schedules to insure a steady flow of men and munitions to the Philippines. Washington now began a crash program to offset the years of apathy and inadequate appropriations. Unfortunately, war broke out sooner than expected. However, even as hostilities were opened, there was on the high seas a convoy of seven ships, under the naval protection of the heavy cruiser Pensacola and the sub-chaser Niagra, steaming towards Manila. The convoy carried critically needed pilots and planes as well as two regiments of artillery and large amounts of ammunition and supplies.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the convoy never reached Manila. In the wake of the devastating attack against Pearl Harbor, a hasty decision was made by a panicky few in Washington to return the convoy to Hawaii. After several days of delay, during which the convoy waited in the Fiji Islands, a presidential decision was made that the convoy, somehow, must reach MacArthur. On 12 December, however, the convoy commander was instructed to continue on to Brisbane, Australia, which he proceeded to do, arriving there on 22 December.<sup>2</sup>

MacArthur was notified on 13 December of Washington's decision. His effort to impart his own sense of urgency to Hart and to get

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<sup>1</sup>Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1941-1942, (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1953), pp. 72-73. Hereinafter cited as Matloff, Strategic Planning.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. pp. 82-84.

him to provide naval vessels to escort the convoy from Brisbane failed. MacArthur considered Hart as a defeatist who had already doomed the islands. Hart, on the other hand, was convinced that his forces were too weak to provide the necessary protection. And on this point he was supported by Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations. This brought an end to the eleventh-hour attempt to reinforce MacArthur.

The conquest of the Philippines was conceived by the Japanese militarists as part of an over-all war plan. Japan had to take the Philippines in order to protect her flanks against a potential U.S. attack from the islands. The Philippines strategically located across her lines of communication to the south was a dagger pointed at the very heart of her master plan to gain the vital resources of South East Asia. The possession of this resources rich area would give Japan control of an enormous supply of oil, rubber and other essentials which she needed to keep her war machine going. At the same time, it would satisfy her national objective in going to war. In Japanese eyes, the Philippines in the hands of an enemy was unthinkable, for in such hands they represented an ideal base for an offensive striking power against Formosa and eventually Japan itself.

Japan's strategy and initial target in her attack on the Philippines was the destruction of MacArthur's air force. It had to be destroyed in order to protect her invasion fleet and forces during their landing phases. MacArthur's planes also presented a serious threat to the flanks of the Japanese communication lines to the south. Hart's

Far East Fleet was only of secondary importance to the Japanese who felt that as a fighting force it was of negligible value.<sup>1</sup> According to the New York Times, Hart's submarine fleet had only enough torpedo power to delay, to harass, and to threaten, but not prevent the arrival of an invasion force.<sup>2</sup>

Within ten hours of the devastating blow struck at Pearl Harbor, a large force of Japanese bombers and fighters carried out several highly successful air raids on Clark Field and the Iba fighter base.<sup>3</sup> The attacks were brief but destructive for when they were over both fields had been turned into a shambles. Seventeen of the nineteen B-17's and forty of the fighters assembled at Clark were destroyed. By the end of the day MacArthur's air force had been materially reduced. Actually it was virtually a second Pearl Harbor.

Subsequent air attacks on the battered airfields and installations were so successful--incredibly so to the aggressor--that by 12 December MacArthur's air force had been virtually demolished. By the third week of the war the fourteen remaining B-17's were flown to Australia.

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<sup>1</sup>For a complete breakdown of the composition, status, and deployment of the Asiatic Fleet see Samuel E. Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931-1942, Vol. III, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1954), pp. 158-59. Hereinafter cited as Morison, Rising Sun.

<sup>2</sup>28 December 1941, p. 4E

<sup>3</sup>For precise information on each plane see Walter D. Edmonds, They Fought With What They Had, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1951).

Their operational use in the defense of Luzon and the Philippines had come to an inglorious end. After this debacle, Japanese pilots flew over the Philippines with complete assurance and with little resistance.

Many reasons have been advanced as to why so many planes were caught on the ground. According to Clarke Lee, an Associated Press war correspondent, and author, the main bomber force located at Clark Field, forty miles north of Manila, had been airborne that morning. They were, however, ordered back to Clark Field to await confirmation of a bombing mission against the Japanese airbases on Formosa. Due to a series of wrong decisions the planes on landing were parked in neat rows like shiny new toys and all arranged in such a way as to be an easy target.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason and in this position the first wave of fifty-four bombers and eighty-six Zero fighters found the core of MacArthur's air force. The same panorama met the astonished eyes of the Japanese bomber and fighter pilots on their approach to Iba. By the time the attacks ended, the Japanese left a roaring hell of flames at both bases. Some of the planes were saved but the main strength of our vaunted air force was gone.<sup>2</sup> In one stroke Japan had removed the greatest barrier to her southward advance with insignificant casualties to herself.

This shameful defeat, overshadowed by the catastrophe at Pearl Harbor, was unknown to the American press and to the American

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<sup>1</sup>Daily Argus Leader, 10 April 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

public--but not to Washington. MacArthur had reported this loss on 10 December. However, Washington did not release the story of this second humiliating defeat to the American press. The Army Air Force Chief, General Henry 'Hap' Arnold, was so irate that he called Brereton from Washington and wanted to know "how in the hell" he let himself get caught in such a predicament.<sup>1</sup> It was on this sour note that the saga of MacArthur's air force came to an inglorious end. What had started out as a bright dream ended in a tarnished memory. The question of who was to blame will be very difficult to resolve.

Edmonds, after a long and exhaustive study, has come to the conclusion that it is pointless to place the blame for what happened on that day on the shoulders of any particular commander. Although MacArthur had over-all control as USAFFE commander, Brereton was in tactical control as the commander of the Far East Air Force. Edmonds feels that there are too many overriding factors that indirectly led to the holocaust and to the breakdown in the operation and security of the airplanes to permit a valid conclusion. The greatest accusation against MacArthur was that he refused to allow the bombers to attack Formosa. What effect a small fleet of bombers, unprotected by fighter escort, flying hundreds of miles to attack unknown targets, would have had is highly questionable. This is particularly so when one considers the fact

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<sup>1</sup>General Arnold had called Brereton shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack and warned him not to get caught napping in the same way. Henry H. Arnold, Global Mission, (New York: Harper Bros., 1949), p. 272.

that the Japanese had a total of 751 modern planes<sup>1</sup> which could be used to pulverize the attackers.

Japan's ability to strike at several objectives simultaneously in the Pacific disproved the experts' prewar assumptions that her military machine was capable of striking only one objective at a time.<sup>2</sup> The whole point to her attack in the Pacific was that it depended on speed and quick success. In order to continue her conquests, it was imperative that she conquer quickly those areas from which she could exploit her resources for war, and those areas, such as the Philippines, which presented a threat to her southward conquests. The suddenness of her attack against the Philippines caught the military commanders there by surprise and placed a severe strain on MacArthur's ambitious plan.

MacArthur's vaunted plan, which was to provide a wall of steel around the Philippines, failed the first crucial test. Notwithstanding the glaring headlines in the nation's press of American-Filipino successes in the Philippines, there was little or no resistance offered by the defenders on the beaches. In the first two weeks of the Philippine epic many unconfirmed and unreliable stories appeared in the American press. While most of them had an element of truth, some were the fabrication of over stimulated minds. Such stories provided the press

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<sup>1</sup>Willoughby, Charles A., Prange, Gordon, W., et. al., Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur In the Pacific, 2 Vols. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), I, 6. Hereinafter cited as Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur. I or II, Part I.

<sup>2</sup>Morison, Rising Sun, p. 187.

with a few days of dramatic headlines, but at the same time the American public was given a false idea of what was actually happening there.

The first Japanese ground action on Luzon did not start until 10 December.<sup>1</sup> On that day Japanese troops made unopposed landings at Aparri and Vigan in northern Luzon.<sup>2</sup> Two days later, a third unopposed landing was made at Legaspi, on the southeast tip of the island.

While the Japanese troops were coming ashore on northern Luzon, the headlines in the American press were screaming of a major invasion attempt at Lubang, sixty air miles southwest of Manila. The Miami Herald's headline, which was most representative of those in most newspapers, stated: "Slaughter Japanese Force."<sup>3</sup> According to the press stories, the courageous American-Filipino defenders fought a fantastic all night battle and turned back a huge armada of enemy ships. The defenders, continued the stories, frustrated the landing attempts of 154 boat loads of Japanese troops by blasting them out of the water. No one reached the shore alive. The morning light revealed no more than the usual debris. There had been neither an invasion

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<sup>1</sup>The first landing on Philippine soil was made on Batan Island, about 150 miles north of Luzon, on 8 December.

<sup>2</sup>Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, II, Part I, 90. For an American view, see Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 7, 10.

<sup>3</sup>10 December 1941, p. 1. Reports of this battle were included in MacArthur's press release of 14 December 1941. Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 10.

attempt nor a battle fought along the shores. The night lights and the dim silhouettes had played on the fears of an imaginative guard. His firing against dancing phantoms had set off the chain reaction of gunfire against ghosts in the night.

The three actual landings at Aparri, Vigan and Legaspi were accomplished with very little of the steadfast resistance reported by the press. MacArthur's troops, mostly inexperienced and ill-equipped, were no match for the more disciplined, battle-hardened and better equipped Japanese. These landings, labeled by the press as major invasions, were, in reality, only the advance elements of the main invasion force. Their mission was to capture designated strategic points which would be used as forward air bases and points of attacks against the defenders during later operations.

The headlines and captions appearing in the San Francisco Chronicle and the Greensboro Daily News, in the early days of the war are indicative of the confused reports which were filed from the Philippines by newspapermen assigned there. On 10 December, the San Francisco Chronicle reported in a heavy black headline spread across seven columns, "Army Wipes Out Japan Foothold in West Luzon."<sup>1</sup> The Greenboro Daily News in the first ten days reported the war under the following headings: "Furious War is Raging in Pacific Area."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>10 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>8 December 1941, p. 1.

"Philippine Landing is Reported, Manila Blasted."<sup>1</sup> "Little Japanese Shopkeeper Found to be Army Leader."<sup>2</sup> "Landing of 'chute' Troops Reported."<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the first week of war the Japanese were well entrenched on Luzon. In an "off the record" interview on 12 December, MacArthur told newspapermen that it was impossible for him to defend all the beaches with the small forces at his disposal, and "that the advance landings were made to tempt him to spread his forces."<sup>4</sup> His basic principle, he said, was "to hold them intact until the enemy committed himself in force."<sup>5</sup>

Even before the war was a week old, urgent appeals for immediate help poured into Washington. The Philippine Commissioner, Francis B. Sayre, made the first appeal for effective help. "Those of us who heard Mr. Sayre," said the Wheeling News Register, "could not help but be stirred and at the same time exasperated and distressed at our helplessness to do something."<sup>6</sup> A week later the Cleveland Plain

<sup>1</sup>9 December 1941, pp. 1, 2.      <sup>2</sup>13 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>19 December 1941, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Lt. Col. H. K. Johnson, "Defense Along the Abucay Line," Military Review, Vol. XXVIII, Number 11, February 1941, p. 43. States that MacArthur's idea of a stand on the beach was given no more than lip service. The main concern, he contends, rested with plans to withdraw as large a force as possible into Bataan.

<sup>5</sup>Romulo, I Saw the Fall of the Philippines, p. 55.

<sup>6</sup>12 December 1941, p. 4.

Dealer reported that a much stronger appeal from Quezon had been received in Washington. Mr. Quezon, the Plain Dealer reported, stated: "aid was indispensable to the defenders of America's island protectorate and must come from the United States."<sup>1</sup>

On 20 December, a 5,000 man Japanese force in fourteen transports invaded Davao, the largest city on the southern island of Mindanao. The only resistance to the landing came from a lone machine gun which was eventually silenced by a direct hit from a Japanese shell.<sup>2</sup> The resistance was quickly overcome and the small defending force of 3,500 were pushed back. By late afternoon both Davao and its airfield had been taken by the Japanese.

The most representative headlines in the United States press appeared in the New York Times: "BIG JAP FORCE IN MINDANAO, BATTLE RAGES,"<sup>3</sup> "HEAVY FIGHTING OFF DAVAO."<sup>4</sup> Although the resistance had been slight, the press treated the small engagement as though it were a major battle. The most fantastic account was printed by the St. Louis Post Dispatch: "The Americans have taken a considerable toll of Japanese ships, planes, and men but have made no effort so far to drive the enemy out by land assault."<sup>5</sup> Commented the Baltimore Sun: "The landing at Davao was the first official report from Manila of

<sup>1</sup>20 December 1941, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup>20 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>21 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>21 December 1941, p. 1.

any attempt by the Japanese to obtain a foothold on any island other than Luzon."<sup>1</sup> The Daily Oklahoman remarked: "In taking Davao, the Japanese clamped the lid on the 'hot hinge of the South Pacific gate' and shattered MacArthur's hope for reinforcements by ships through that port."<sup>2</sup>

In analyzing the continuing extraordinary military successes of Japan, the nation's press was agreed on several points. One, the Japanese campaign had been carefully prepared; two, air power contributed most to their success; three, even after the element of surprise was no longer a factor, Japan had developed a strategy beautifully suited to ocean and island warfare.<sup>3</sup> The Philadelphia Inquirer also attributed Japan's success to the system of unity of command, which, according to the Inquirer, placed "every fighting arm--land, sea, and air--under one man whose job it is to boss and win a campaign."<sup>4</sup> Morton points out that the coordination and razor sharp timing which gave the press the impression of a unified command was misleading. "Although there were no provisions made for unified command of the services, separate agreements were made between Army and Fleet commanders for each operation."<sup>5</sup>

The Albuquerque Journal saw in Japan's victories not so much her fighting ability but rather her strategy. "She spent freely her

<sup>1</sup>20 December 1941, p. 1.      <sup>2</sup>20 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Detroit Free Press, 7 March 1942, p. 8b.

<sup>4</sup>7 March 1942, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 56.

greatest resources--manpower, and she put more men, more planes, more ships, and more firepower where she opened the fighting."<sup>1</sup> According to the Emporia Daily Gazette, Japan's success was due to her strategy of "establishing land bases near the next objective so that Japanese aircraft could pound their adversaries without traveling great distances."<sup>2</sup>

With its limited objective won, with the vaunted American Navy nowhere in sight and cleared from the Philippine waters, and with MacArthur's air force made ineffective, the Japanese were ready for the next stage of the Luzon battle--their main drive into the Philippines.

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<sup>1</sup>2 January 1942, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>23 January 1942, p. 4.

## CHAPTER III

### BATTLE FOR LUZON

The fate of the Philippines was sealed on 22 December. The long awaited blow came in the early morning hours of that day when the Japanese troops, under strong navy escort, landed in force along the coast of Lingayen Gulf (Map 2). The area where the Japanese had chosen to land is a natural landing point for an invading expedition. An American newspaper called this location "the strategic center of American power in the archipelago."<sup>1</sup>

Surprise was not the keynote of Japan's invasion of Lingayen Gulf for patrolling there was the submarine Stingray. It immediately radioed a message reporting the presence of the huge enemy convoy of about eighty transports. When news of the invasion fleet reached General Headquarters, USAFFE, MacArthur requested an all-out submarine attack. Five submarines were ordered out to intercept the approaching force, but, unfortunately, they arrived too late to inflict a major blow on the troop ships while they were still in deep water. However, two of the submarines, the S-38 and the Seal, did succeed in

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<sup>1</sup>Washington Evening Star, 23 December 1941, p. A-10.

sinking the transport Hayo Maru on 22 December and the freighter Hayatka Maru on 23 December respectively. Although the seaplane tender Sanuki Maru received two direct hits from an alert shore battery, she continued operations.<sup>1</sup>

General MacArthur's headquarters, in reporting the presence of the invasion force, announced: "Early today an undetermined number of Japanese landed some one hundred miles north of Manila from a Japanese flotilla of eighty transports. Fighting is raging between the Port of Lingayen and the town of Agoon." The USAFFE announcement ended with the comment that "the enemy was pushing the attack."<sup>2</sup>

The two most representative headlines appearing in the American press on the invasion were those of the Boston Globe: "80 Jap Laden Ships Off Luzon U. S. Ready,"<sup>3</sup> and the Baltimore Sun: "JAPS OFF 80 TRANSPORTS PUSH NEW LUZON ATTACKS."<sup>4</sup> When reporting the size of the invasion fleet the American press was rather consistent and as a rule gave accurate figures of the number of transports involved.

However, this consistency did not hold true when the U. S. press reported on the number of Japanese troops involved in the Philippine invasion. On this subject the nation's press was very inconsistent

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<sup>1</sup>The others were the Saury, Samon and the S-40. For a complete composition of the invading forces see Morison, Rising Sun, p. 161-163.

<sup>2</sup>Baltimore Sun, 22 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>22 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>22 December 1941, p. 1.

and was never able to achieve an equitable balance between the actual numbers involved and those reported to the public. As the battles increased in numbers and intensity the invaders increased in quantity. With the exception of the Baltimore Sun which estimated an enemy force as low as 30,000,<sup>1</sup> most press headlines reflected between 80,000 to 100,000 enemy troops involved in the main landing of 22 December.

On 22 December the Sun commented that military observers had determined that eighty transports were capable of carrying between 30,000 to 50,000 troops. On 23 December its editorial increased the low figures of the previous day to a new estimate of about 80,000 to 100,000. Then, on 25 December its military analyst, Mark S. Watson, on the basis of the 100 transports observed in Luzon waters, computed the Japanese force as of that date to be 125,000. Even the normally sedate New York Times was caught off balance in the number of Japanese troops it listed as being in the Philippines.

On 23 December, the New York Times reported "80,000 JAPANESE ATTACK ON LUZON COAST." On the same day it stated that a War Department communique from Washington had estimated the number of Japanese in Luzon to be from 80,000 to 100,000. On 25 December, the Times revised its estimate again in a page one story when it stated: "Japs in Luzon put at 200,000." On 23 January 1942, it implied that as many as 500,000 enemy troops were in the Philippines; however, it immediately revised this figure to a more conservative but

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

still excessive 200,000.<sup>1</sup> Other representative figures quoted by the American press fluctuated between 100,000 and 300,000.<sup>2</sup> These figures as a rule were subject to change and often varied in accordance with the intensity of the battles or the number of transports sighted off Luzon.

While other newspapers quoted specific figures, the Emporia Gazette in its editorial, "Shall We Save MacArthur," stated: "Still the Japanese are coming to the islands by the thousands whereas MacArthur has less than 50,000."<sup>3</sup>

The Japanese troop strength figures quoted by the American press were completely unrealistic and inconsistent with the facts. First, since the conquest of the Philippines was a secondary objective for the Japanese, the number of troops projected for this operation was limited; second, and more important, Japan did not possess unlimited manpower.<sup>4</sup> This was scored several months later when one American newspaper remarked that it was the considered opinion of qualified military experts

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<sup>1</sup>23 January 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>See for example, Newark Star Ledger, Philadelphia Inquirer, Miami Herald, and the Minnesota Star Journal among many during the period 22 December 1941 and 8 February 1942. Also see the Chicago Daily News during this same period for its estimates which fluctuated between 200,000 and 500,000.

<sup>3</sup>29 February 1942, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Japan's military strength was 6,983,000. Of these, 2,500,000 were in Japan and the balance were in China or on the Pacific islands. MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 285. See also Morton, Philippines, for the Organization and Disposition of Japanese Army, p. 55.

in Australia that in the Japanese campaign in Malaya, the Netherland East Indies, the Philippines, and throughout the island territories in the Australia neighborhood, the Japanese never used more than 500,000 troops. Then it added:

It has been a common practice for our apologists to blame Japanese success so far on a so-called unlimited supply of manpower. Yet, almost to a man, our most capable military leaders are agreed that this is a totally fallacious argument.<sup>1</sup>

And finally because of other high priority missions, shipment of men and equipment to the Philippines were curtailed. Why, then, the astronomical figures? Were they deliberately fabricated to sell newspapers or were they honest mistakes, written on the basis of emotion rather than fact, or were the figures intentionally "managed"?

The reasons are varied. For one thing, the first casualty of war is generally the truth. Then, too, newspapermen captivated by the drama of the events of war accepted estimates of troop strength from front line soldiers or from civilian eyewitnesses without question or without verification from authoritative sources. A further motive, since war provides the ingredients for a real heart-throbbing human-interest story, may have been the desire of over-anxious reporters to score a "scoop" and give their editor the "Big Story." Such stories can be dramatized for several days while increasing sales. A fourth explanation for the exaggerated troop strength was the slanting of news by

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Sunday Tribune, 14 April 1942, p. 1.

MacArthur's headquarters.<sup>1</sup> This latter possibility cannot be discounted and may have been the greatest factor in the start of the legend that the Japanese invaders in the Philippines greatly outnumbered the defending forces.

Two examples, both practiced by USAFFE, illustrate this point. One, by not giving out at the scheduled press conferences the specific number of enemy troops involved, misconceptions could easily be established at the outset. Two, by the use of ambiguous words or phrases in communiques or press releases, such as "outnumbered" by a battle-hardened force, invaded by an "undetermined number" of enemy troops, "overwhelming numbers," or "numerically superior" forces, everything but clarity entered the picture. Such terms often lead to generalization and to the inconsistencies which were very obvious in the headlines and lead stories of the American press.

On 24 December, the Baltimore Sun, in quoting a press conference held by USAFFE, remarked that heavy fighting was going on in the north and that at one point Japanese destroyers were driven off by our heavy guns. An official spokesman at the conclusion of his conference, the Sun reported, stated that the "news at hand was good news." Yet on this same day another official notice released by USAFFE indicated that a greatly outnumbered American-Filipino force was battling violently against a new Japanese invasion army which had landed along Lamon

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<sup>1</sup>For an excellent contrast of American and Japanese views, see Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, Vol. I, for the American view and Vol. II, Part I, for the Japanese view.

Bay coast. According to the announcement, this new invasion force had landed from twenty-four heavily loaded transports during the early morning hours of 24 December at Atimonan and Mauban and were about seventy-five miles from Manila (Map 2).

While most newspapers mentioned the presence of twenty-four transports, the Baltimore Sun reported "40 Ships Land 75 Miles From Manila." It then added that observers here interpreted the latest invasion as "an attempt to make MacArthur split his forces and thus weaken the resistance on the northern front where his men are standing off another invasion army against great odds."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the estimates of Japanese troop strength given in the United States press, the number of Japanese soldiers which opposed MacArthur's forces between 8 and 28 December totalled approximately 64,000.<sup>2</sup> The initial landings on Luzon numbered about 8,500 troops. The invasion of Davao involved approximately 5,000 men, but 3,500 of these were shipped to other war zones shortly after. The Lamon Bay force equaled approximately 7,000 soldiers and the Lingayen Bay force which the press reported as totalling about 100,000 actually totalled 43,110 and was subdivided as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>24 December 1941, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, pp. 100, 103, 106, 109, 125, 139.

14th Army Units	34,856
Army Air Force	3,621
Shipping Units	4,633
Total	<u>43,110<sup>1</sup></u>

The arrival of this large force concluded the shipment of large size units to the Philippines until March when the Japanese command diverted units up to division strength from other battle areas. By the end of March Japanese reinforcements totalled approximately 30,000. Included in this figure were 7,000 replacements for the casualties suffered by the invaders since the initial landings.

A computation of the available figures reveals that by 1 April Lt. General Masaharu Homma, Commanding General of the Japanese 14th Army, had approximately 94,000 army personnel in the Philippines. Since these figures refer almost exclusively to army personnel, it is possible that by mid-May the number of Japanese from all military services in the Philippines equaled almost twice that figure before they were diverted to other high priority areas.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of units that MacArthur had in position along Lingayen Gulf to oppose Homma's landing force consisted of inadequately trained and ill-equipped troops.<sup>3</sup> There was a scarcity of division

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<sup>1</sup>Letter, Chief of Hist. SSUSA to G-2 GHQ FEC, Nov 9 48, 3rd Ind., Aug 16 49: Morton, Philippines, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, II, Part I, 122. Prange sets the figure at 191,939, as follows: Army 129,435, Air Force 12,752, Navy 49,752.

<sup>3</sup>The Philippine Army fought with cast-off weapons of World War I, with some types of ammunition that seldom exploded. See General Clifford Bluemel's letter, Appendix D.

artillery and many men lacking the most rudimentary knowledge of military tactics. One unit, the 71st Infantry Regiment, 71st Infantry Division, had been rushed into the breach after a training period of only ten weeks.<sup>1</sup> This was an impossible situation for unseasoned troops who without benefit of adequate training were being asked to repel one of the best trained forces in the world. Unlike his American trainee counterpart who had had a year or more of strenuous training, the Filipino recruit was forced to complete his training on the actual field of battle, often in a matter of hours.<sup>2</sup>

Other units along the beaches were the 26th Cavalry (PS)<sup>3</sup> and the 12th Infantry (PA).<sup>4</sup> The 12th, waiting on the beach, was equipped with one .50 caliber machine gun and several .30 caliber machine guns which due to malfunctions were soon out of action. The gun crew of the larger gun caught many Japanese in its murderous bursts and inflicted heavy casualties until destroyed by a direct hit.

Not all the Filipino defenders were valiant or fought heroically in their first baptism of fire. Many broke and ran. Unseasoned troops as a rule cannot be compelled to stand and offer resistance and these Filipino units were no exception. But those who stood their ground fought gallantly and retreated grudgingly. Notwithstanding the individual

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Denver Post, 7 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>(PS) - Philippine Scout

<sup>4</sup>(PA) - Philippine Army

acts of heroism, MacArthur's troops were no match for the more disciplined and better equipped invader who enjoyed the mastery of the sea and skies around Luzon.

By 25 December the Japanese had gained seven strong footholds on Luzon (Map 2) and began to set what they hoped would be a trap for MacArthur. Pressing from several points simultaneously, Homma hoped to catch the defenders in the middle when the jaws of his giant pincer were slammed shut. His plan failed. MacArthur refused to be duped. He was too experienced a commander to allow his forces to be crushed by such a movement and destroyed in detail.

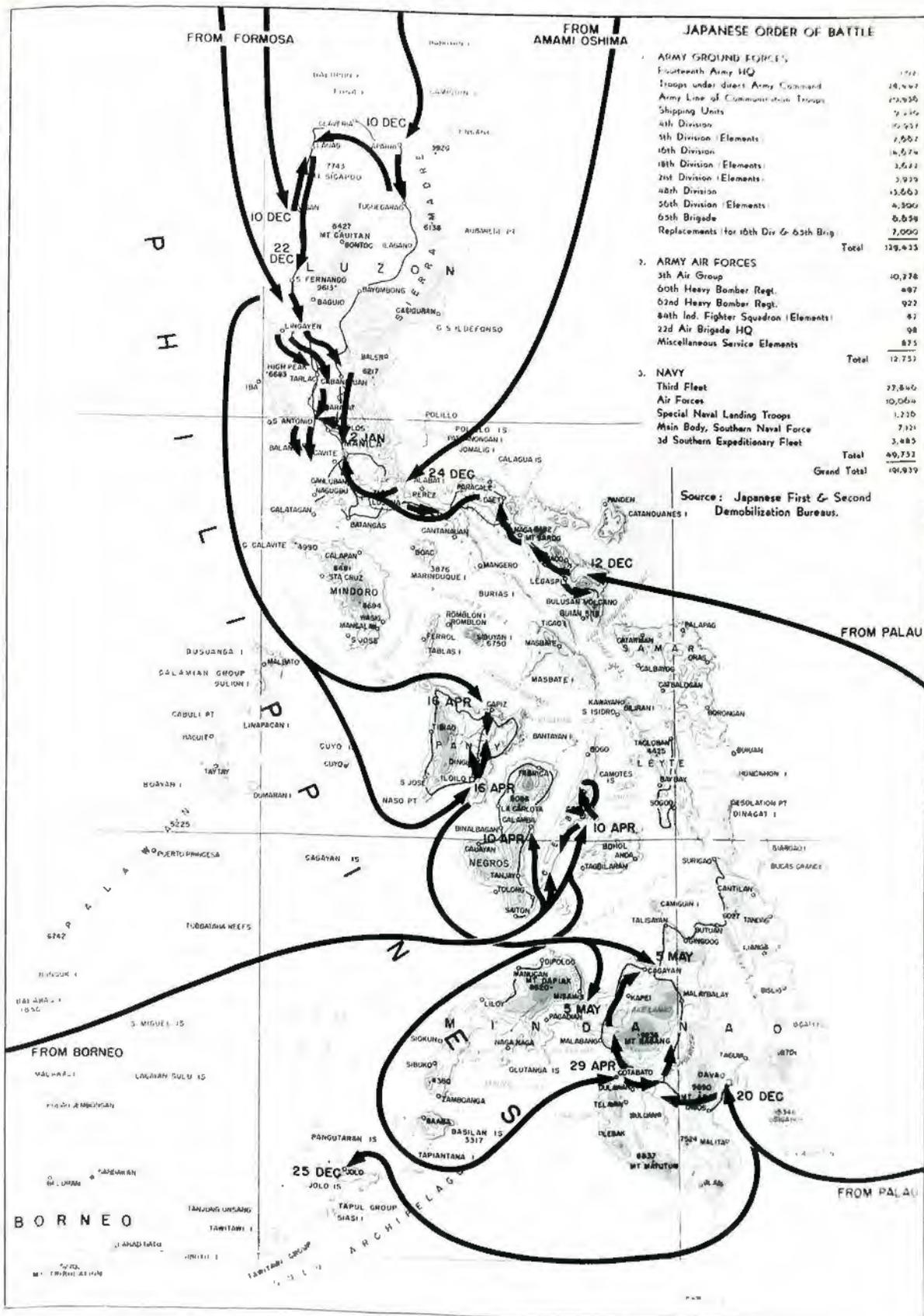
To better coordinate the efforts of his forces, on 24 December MacArthur moved into the field with an advance element of his headquarters. A rear echelon remained in Manila to destroy everything of value to the enemy and to keep the communication lines open. When the rear echelon left Manila on New Year's Eve to join the elements in the field most supplies of value had been destroyed.<sup>1</sup> MacArthur had decided to forego even a token defense of Manila and declare it an open city.

To spare Manila, on 26 December MacArthur declared the capital an open city. His action was both condemned and praised. One of the most biting and sarcastic comments came from the Soviet paper Pravda, the official mouthpiece of the Soviet Government. Labeling "the action as cowardly,"<sup>2</sup> it likened the move to "Petain's" tactics

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in New York Times, 1 January 1942, p. 1.



Source: Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 5.

MAP 2

The Japanese Invasion of the Philippines

that gave the enemy an open passage to a country. It called the failure of MacArthur to transform Manila into a Trobruk or Leningrad an act of cowardice.

In sounding out official Washington's reaction to Pravda's views, the San Francisco Chronicle was informed that Washington had no desire to stir up controversy with the Russians and that "our people were under a most skillful fighter."<sup>1</sup> Completely satisfied with MacArthur's method, the War Department described his conduct of operation as "masterful."<sup>2</sup> Even the strategists familiar with the defense situation "have nothing but high praise for the foresight and courage of MacArthur."<sup>3</sup> The Los Angeles Times called MacArthur's decision on Manila a brilliant piece of strategy and added: "A less able tactician might have elected to make a last-man defense of the city until there was no chance of escape."<sup>4</sup> Such valor, questionable at best, would have resulted in destruction to the city and his army.

MacArthur's action, to begin with, was not new. The decision not to defend Manila had been inherent in the various Army-Navy war plans for the Philippines. Bataan and Corregidor, not the capital, were to be the key to the defense of Manila Bay. The plans had never anticipated or desired that a last ditch stand would be made in the defense of

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<sup>1</sup>San Francisco Chronicle, 2 January 1942, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>New York Times, 2 January 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Nevada State Journal, 24 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>3 January 1942, p. 4.

the capital. Manila had no strategic value and, while it had some political significance as the capital of the Philippines, it was militarily indefensible.

MacArthur's decision to yield the city as soon as he did found support in some of the nation's press. The Cleveland Plain Dealer, for example, in a two-column header on 3 January thought he would make a "stubborn stand on soil of his own choosing." In abandoning Manila, the Providence Journal believed that "MacArthur had no choice and that the responsibility comes back to the United States."<sup>1</sup>

But not every editor favored MacArthur's move. An unnamed Eastern editor in a strongly worded telegram to the President and to the War Department bitterly condemned the removal of all defenses and the decision to make Manila an open city. It attributed the death and destruction created by the Japanese bombs to MacArthur's decision which allowed the Japanese to attack in comparative safety without fear of reprisal. In commenting on this issue, the Indianapolis Star declared: "It is a long way from the Eastern seaboard of this country to Manila, and we suspect that General MacArthur knows what he is doing much better than a carping critic here."<sup>2</sup>

MacArthur's unilateral decision to declare Manila an open city was not acceptable to the Japanese. American troops, Tokyo

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<sup>1</sup>3 January 1942, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted from the Newcastle Courier Times, 10 January 1942, p. 10.

stated, continued to maintain positions around Manila and to pass through it. While the city stood stripped of its air defenses, the Japanese bombed it on 27 December.<sup>1</sup> This bombing proved a tactless act and a great blunder on the part of the Japanese. The bitter anger and condemnation which it produced only helped to stiffen Filipino resistance and prepare the way for eventual attacks on Japanese cities.

The Japanese had offered to spare Manila and consider the capital an open city if the Filipino forces would cease all resistance. Their refusal brought the Japanese bombers back again on 28 December. Entire blocks of the historical walled town "Intramuros" were laid waste as churches, schools, and public buildings were bombed and destroyed. On the following day the bombers returned to bomb the shipping and port area.

Senator George W. Norris (Ind-Neb.) expressed what appeared to be Allied sentiment when he asserted that the Japanese had disregarded all rules of warfare and in turn could claim no immunity under such rules. He further stated: "Their cities are open to attack; when we are ready we will burn them off the face of the earth, and that is what they are coming to."<sup>2</sup> Subsequent events proved him right. The B-29's of General Curtis LeMay's 20th Air Force in the Pacific reduced many areas of Japanese cities to ashes by fire-bombs before the atomic holocaust

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Baltimore Sun, 28 December 1941, p. 1, among many.

<sup>2</sup>Idaho Sunday Statesman, 28 December 1941, p. 1, among many.

of 6 August 1945 at Hiroshima.

The impending fall of Manila aroused concern in the United States for the fate of the Philippines and the best course of action to follow. The San Francisco Chronicle saw a need to develop a "psychology of attack"<sup>1</sup> and stripping San Francisco, Boston, and New York if necessary to send guns and planes to Manila and Singapore. On the basis of the Manila withdrawal, American military strategists gloomily predicted the loss of the Philippines before the end of the year. In commenting on this prediction the Bismarck Tribune caustically observed:

Our military strategists are frank to say we cannot hold the Philippines. These same men said Russia could not last six months but Russian grit proved them wrong. American initiative and courage must prove their error with regard to the Philippines.<sup>2</sup>

Then in reference to the importance of Singapore, which it discounted, the Bismarck Tribune continued:

If we rule the Philippines, the value of any other holdings will be reduced, for the Philippines constitute a spearhead aimed directly at the sealanes between Southern Asia and the Japanese homeland. Much depends on the speed to reinforce our troops there. It is a risk we must take, and in running it we will no doubt suffer losses.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the Mobile Register, in support of the strategists, discounted the Philippines as a pivotal point in the Far East when it stated: "Singapore is the pivotal and crucial point in

<sup>1</sup>23 December 1941, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>23 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>24 December 1941, p. 4.

that area. A defeat at Singapore would be a disastrous loss to those nations resisting Japan's aggression. It is the focal point of all interest in the Far East."<sup>1</sup>

With the war three weeks old and supplies and equipment being used at an unprecedented rate, MacArthur, facing a battle of survival, began his urgent appeals to Washington on 28 December for food and military equipment which were running dangerously low. General Marshall's promises to extend every effort to send reinforcements and equipment as soon as possible helped MacArthur to sustain the faith of his troops on Bataan.<sup>2</sup>

On 29 December, most headlines in the American newspapers read: "F. D. R. Pledges Philippines' Freedom."<sup>3</sup> In a press statement to the American people, President Roosevelt promised all the needed resources to defeat the enemy. He gave notice to the world that the war was a duel that would end in the complete destruction of one belligerent or the other. "Japan," he said, "is selected for the grim fate." His remarks were followed by those of the Navy's which gave assurance that it, too, was acting to give positive assistance to the Philippines. Both statements pledged to exert strong efforts for the freedom and independence of the Philippines.

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<sup>1</sup>18 December 1941, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 128; Morton, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup>Philadelphia Inquirer, 29 December 1941, p. 1, among many.

The President's statement confused many people, including a large number of the press. When the press stressed that immediate aid would be given to the Philippines, a sharp rebuke from the White House indicated that this was not what the President intended. According to the New York Times, after it had analyzed the speech, the President's pledges were "in terms of the ultimate rather than in terms of the immediate."<sup>1</sup>

This confusion only served to focus the attention of the press once again on the anguished pleas coming out of the Philippines and to the administration's misguided efforts in the Pacific. In the nation's capital, the Washington Evening Star agreed that aid was needed in the Pacific, but only to Singapore, "the key," in its words, "of the entire Allied defense line in the Orient."<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the Concord Daily Monitor in the northeast saw the "retention of the Philippines as imperative." Without help, it said, "the defenders were doomed."<sup>3</sup> Across the state line in Maine, the Bangor Daily News asked, "When are adequate operations to start in the Philippines? Time passes. Time presses and the critics do not have all the answers."<sup>4</sup>

On that same day, the Daily Oklahoman in the southwest reported the first serious outpouring of discontent among the American "grass root" folks. "The reverses in the Pacific," it stated, "have

<sup>1</sup>30 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>25 December 1941, p. A-8.

<sup>3</sup>29 December 1941, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>31 December 1941, p. 8.

created a rising wave of congressional criticism against the administration."<sup>1</sup> Several days later and further north, the Nebraska State Journal, an occasional supporter of the administration, placed the blame for the Philippine situation not on the administration but on Congress. "Congress," it said, "was to blame for not appropriating adequate and timely appropriations to fortify her Pacific possessions."<sup>2</sup>

The hope that Russia would enter the Pacific War was also widespread among the American press, the military experts, and the commentators in Washington. This idea was strongly advocated by MacArthur at this time because it would help relieve the Japanese pressure from the Philippines.<sup>3</sup>

The New York Times was one of the first among the American press to suggest that Russia join the United States in the Pacific effort and stated that if she did not help, "then the policy of aid-to-Russia should be discontinued."<sup>4</sup> The Arkansas Democrat called such hopes "wishful thinking," and added that "Russia's entrance would depend on Stalin, who was the best judge of when he should take that risk."<sup>5</sup> The Los Angeles Times, in supporting this view, belittled the idea of looking to others to fight our battles. In a hard hitting editorial, it emphasized that "it is useless and unworthy of us as a great nation to stand

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<sup>1</sup>31 December 1941, p. 8.      <sup>2</sup>3 January 1942, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Morton, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup>11 December 1941, p. 26.      <sup>5</sup>15 December 1941, p. 10.

about hoping that the Russians or anyone else would defeat our declared enemy for us."<sup>1</sup> Yet in February, the American president would tell the nation to forget about themselves and help defeat the declared enemy of others.

On 29 December, the British-Russian position in the Far East was clarified by a joint statement issued on that day. The Concord Daily Monitor reported that after a strategy meeting held in Moscow, both nations decided to place the priority on the war against Hitler.<sup>2</sup> The significance of this announcement to MacArthur was threefold: First, it was a clear indication that Russia would not agree to attacking Japan, thereby dashing any American hope that she would intervene. Second, it reinforced the framework of the Allied Grand Strategy within which the Allies worked until the end of the European War. And, finally, it indicated that the British would concentrate their major effort on the defense of Britain, Northern Africa, and the Near East. The Far East and the Philippines were to hold on as long as humanly possible.

On 31 December, the Detroit Free Press reported that the White House, through the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Tom Connally (D-Tex.), informed the press "to be prepared for the loss of Manila."<sup>3</sup> It was a discouraging assessment of the Philippines' future and the administration's way of preparing the

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<sup>1</sup> 1 January 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 29 December 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> 31 December 1941, p. 11.

American people for its ultimate fall. This statement from the White House caused the American press and the nation to speculate on the ultimate fate of MacArthur.

One of the most representative views of the press on this subject was expressed by the Des Moines Register: "It would be foolish for an army to surrender one of its outstanding field commanders through any outmoded sense of personal chivalry of battle."<sup>1</sup> The Providence Journal scored the same point.

MacArthur should not be a party to Custer's last stand. When the jig is up he should get out of Luzon for nothing would be gained in a street-to-street and house-to-house battle which could result in a senseless and profitless destruction.<sup>2</sup>

The New York Times, normally a supporter of Roosevelt, viewed the loss of Manila as an error in defense. It stated that the error was "not of MacArthur and his men, but rather an error in the grand strategy emanating from Washington."<sup>3</sup> The Atlanta Constitution was also critical: "America was caught unprepared to fight a war of the scope revealed by the Japanese offensive."<sup>4</sup>

On 2 January, Manilans were informed by the Manila Tribune that the Japanese were expected to enter the city on that day. They were urged to be calm and were told that the occupying force under international law had complete power of government and hence were to

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<sup>1</sup>1 January 1942, p. 1.      <sup>2</sup>3 January 1942, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>3 January 1942, p. 18.      <sup>4</sup>3 January 1942, p. 4.

be obeyed.<sup>1</sup> The first Japanese troops entered the city at 3:00 p.m. Manila time (1:00 a.m. EST). For the first time in forty-three years since the American flag was first hoisted there at 5:43 p.m. on 13 August 1898, "a foreign flag," remarked the Philadelphia Inquirer, "floated over Manila."<sup>2</sup>

While the capture of Manila was lamented in the United States, it was celebrated in Spain as a revenge for the "Infamy of 1898." The Newark Star-Ledger, in quoting the Spanish press, remarked that Japan had promised to return one-half of the Philippines to Spain for "her coming participation in the historic events which are going to change the face of the earth."<sup>3</sup>

Two of the most disturbing aspects of the Japanese successes in the Philippines to the American press and people were: One, the ability of a large naval force to suddenly appear on the horizon without interference from the American Navy; and, two, the inability of this same Navy to get aid to the Philippines. Since the whereabouts of the American Navy remained shrouded in mystery, the nation's press speculated as to its whereabouts, and asked: "Where is the Fleet?"<sup>4</sup>

The Navy was not the only one to feel the sting of criticism. The administration in Washington also got its share. Complaints began

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<sup>1</sup>2 January 1942, p. 1.      <sup>2</sup>2 January 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>23 January 1942, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup>Daily Argus Leader, 29 December 1941, p. 1. Also New York Times.

to pour into Congress from all over the country asking why reinforcements had not been sent to Manila.

Another constant critic of administration policies, the Wyoming State Tribune, in its editorial of 4 January, reported that the American people "wanted answers and action now." This blast was followed on 9 January with another shaft:

Congress is seething with criticism of the Navy due to the negligence of the admirals and to the often repeated assertions by the sea-dogs that the slant-eyed yellow man could be defeated in a few months because of our navy's tremendous striking power.

To the American press and public the administration's effort to send aid to MacArthur was grossly inadequate. Yet, what was being overlooked, remarked the Los Angeles Times, was that "the first battles of war had to be won on the production lines and in the shipyards inside the United States, by the American people themselves,"<sup>1</sup> for total war knew no boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup>20 December 1941, p. 4.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTO BATAAN

The situation in the Philippines as the year ended was serious.

In a year-end press release MacArthur stated:

The enemy is driving in great force from both the north and south. His dive bombers practically control the roads from the air. The Japanese are using great quantities of tanks and armored units. Our lines are being pushed back.<sup>1</sup>

In appraising the reasons for the American-Filipino withdrawal from the beaches without a sustained struggle, the Chicago Tribune attributed the failures to an inadequate trained force: "There were insufficient trained troops to effectively man all the invasion points and to maintain and operate the more complex implements of war."<sup>2</sup> The Tribune also observed that the inability of the defenders to cover all possible invasion points revealed a glaring weakness in MacArthur's plan for the defense of the whole archipelago. Thus, under such limitations, it pointed out, MacArthur could only offer token resistance. Another reason for the failure is that MacArthur placed too much faith in the ability of his Filipino troops to stop the Japanese while at the

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<sup>1</sup>GHQ, USAFFE, Press Release, 31 December 1941, Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 16.

<sup>2</sup>27 December 1941, p. 8.

same time underestimating the ability of his opponent.

Although Homma's troops were proceeding with comparable success on all sectors and pushing MacArthur's lines back, they were unable to make MacArthur stand and fight. The traditional battle that they had expected--the defense of the capital, which would have ended the main resistance--did not materialize. The decisive battle was still to be fought.

MacArthur's first crucial test was the Calumpit bridge which spanned the swift flowing Pampanga River, and was located just south of San Fernando in Pampanga Province. A premature destruction or the capture of the bridge by the Japanese would trap most of the defenders east of the Pampanga. To prevent this from happening, MacArthur ordered a strong defense to be made north of the bridge, around the Paridel-Baliung area, to stop any Japanese attempt to seize it. At about 0500 on 1 January, the last large Philippine unit, the 51st Infantry, crossed the Pampanga. After waiting for an hour and fifteen minutes and making sure that all other American-Filipino units were safely across, Wainwright gave the orders to blow the bridge.<sup>1</sup> The blast was a signal to Homma that by not destroying the bridge in the initial stages of MacArthur's withdrawal, he had committed a serious

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, 210; Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, II, Part I, 102. Reflects that the Japanese 7th Tank Regiment captured and occupied the Calumpit bridges on 2 January and that Japanese troops then used them to cross the river.

and costly blunder.<sup>1</sup>

On that same day a press release from MacArthur's headquarters stated:

In order to prevent the enemy's infiltration from the east from separating the forces in southern Luzon from those in northern Luzon, the Southern Luzon Force for several days has been moving north and has now successfully completed junction with the Northern Luzon Force . . . . The entrance to Manila Bay is completely covered by our forces and its use is thereby denied the enemy.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the optimism shown in the press release, MacArthur's problems were far from being resolved. There still remained two more formidable barriers through which he had to funnel his troops. Any undue delay on the part of the troops or a determined effort on the part of the enemy could spell disaster for the whole operation.

The next critical point that the retreating troops had to withdraw through was the town of San Fernando, located northwest of the Calumpit bridge. It is an important road and rail junction, strategically located about thirty-five miles northwest of Manila. San Fernando represented the key to MacArthur's blueprint and had to be held at all costs. The withdrawing forces from the north and the south united here and formed a consolidated line.

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<sup>1</sup>Two officers had requested that the bridge be destroyed but the 14th Army Air Officer's view was that the bridge was unimportant; consequently, it was left intact. The emphasis was put on bombing the retreating enemy. Morton, Philippines, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup>GHQ, USAFFE, Press Release, 1 Jan 42. Quoted in Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 16.

Along a fifteen mile front which extended from Guagua on the east to Porac on the west, Wainwright positioned two of his best Philippine Army units, the 11th and 21st Divisions. One of the Japanese units opposing the defenders was the Tanaka Detachment under the command of Colonel Toru Tanaka.

In the early morning hours of 5 January, the Tanaka force, attacking in bright moonlight, was decisively defeated in its repeated attempts to pierce the defenders' lines. The Indianapolis Star reported that 700 of the enemy were killed, and in assessing the victory stated: "It is encouraging, but it does not indicate that we are accomplishing anything more than delay."<sup>1</sup> The Dallas Morning News viewed it as a great victory for the defenders who "outmaneuvered and outfought their Japanese foe to get their first taste of victory and take a heavy toll of the enemy."<sup>2</sup> To the Providence Journal, it represented a moral victory and "although the defenders warded off the Japanese attacks they were forced to retreat."<sup>3</sup> On the whole, the Journal's appraisal typified the feelings of the American press on the defenders' victory.

The final withdrawal of the defenders into Bataan had to be staged through the critical Loyac Junction and over the single-span Culo bridge. The success of this complicated maneuver depended on each unit maintaining a strict march discipline as well as a well-timed and coordinated schedule. It proved to be otherwise, for the withdrawal

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<sup>1</sup>6 January 1942, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>6 January 1942, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>6 January 1942, p. 1.

bordered on mass confusion. Fortunately, it was made without harassing enemy action. The 21st Field Artillery area was one of extreme confusion as infantry, tanks, and artillery pieces became intermingled. Colonel Richard C. Mallonee, senior instructor of the 21st, labeled the confusion "the first stages of an old fashioned southern political mass meeting and free barbecue."<sup>1</sup> By a single act of judgment, Homma, who had another golden opportunity to complete the battle of the Philippines on schedule, contributed to his own failure.

Nat Floyd, the New York Times correspondent, described the first week on Bataan as orderly confusion. "Trucks and buses ran in all directions night and day, loaded and empty, over the single lane gravel roads."<sup>2</sup> The sight of empty trucks rolling into Bataan was especially tragic, for each empty truck represented a lost opportunity to carry much needed supplies and rations into Bataan.

In two short weeks, MacArthur had brought his forces under desperate circumstances and by two difficult maneuvers and two different routes safely into Bataan. Not one major unit was cut off or lost during this period. However, it should be noted that of the 43,000 Filipinos that had started the withdrawal from the beaches only 28,000 reached Bataan. The loss came largely from desertions. The Japanese

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from Mallonee Bataan Diary, 2 vols. I, 131. Copy in Office Chief of Military History; see Morton, Philippines, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup>22 April 1942, pp. 1, 4.

casualties, in this same period, numbered about 4,500 men.<sup>1</sup> MacArthur's military skill and strategy brought words of admiration and praise from the nation's press and from military experts from other nations.

The Newark Star-Ledger commented that a Netherlands Indies military expert had characterized MacArthur's decision to lay his battle line in Bataan as one of the "truly great pieces of strategy in this war and one which would have been shirked by most commanders."<sup>2</sup>

The San Francisco Chronicle remarked that among the British military experts there was a deep and frank admiration for MacArthur's stand and for his successful withdrawal into Bataan. What they admired most, said the Chronicle, was his highly original and effective battle against the Japanese forces and getting his troops into Bataan with only slight losses.<sup>3</sup>

Even Tokyo did not hesitate to praise MacArthur's skill and admit that the Japanese were having difficulty in dislodging him. Tokyo's admission also summed up rather accurately the consensus of most military minds. "Repeatedly tested by Japanese air and land attacks, the line is still firmly rooted and his guns dominate most of his narrow front and Subic Bay."<sup>4</sup> Tokyo and Homma now knew that with

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<sup>1</sup>Number given by former Japanese officers at General Homma's trial in 1946. For American figures, see Morton, Philippines, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup>5 February 1942, p. 2.      <sup>3</sup>16 March 1942, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in the Daily Oklahoman, 16 January 1942, p. 13.

MacArthur on Bataan victory would not come easily or cheaply.<sup>1</sup> Although badly battered and tired of running, the defenders with morale high were more than willing to stand and fight. On 7 January, MacArthur informed Washington that he was on his main battle-line.<sup>2</sup>

Meantime, in the United States the President called upon the American people to produce 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, and thousands of other needed equipment. In commenting on the speech the New Haven Journal-Courier declared: "A fighting talk given in terms of the future."<sup>3</sup> But it takes time to translate rhetoric and good intentions into positive action and time was what the defenders of Bataan did not have. In retrospect, one of the American defenders, while a prisoner of war, stated: "With all the marvelous production figures we've seen its mighty little to cheer us up in here."<sup>4</sup>

Observing the failure of Washington officials to translate Roosevelt's elegant words into implements of war, the Bataan troops, according

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<sup>1</sup>For some very interesting comments of the Japanese commanders who opposed MacArthur, see Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 16. The consensus was that it was a masterful strategic move and that the speed and efficiency of the operation caught them completely by surprise.

<sup>2</sup>This was the Abucay-Moran line (Map 3).

<sup>3</sup>7 January 1942, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup>Quotation is from one of several letters written by Major Carl Baehr, Jr., while a prisoner of war in the Philippines. This letter dated 31 October 1944 was smuggled out of the prison camp and delivered to his mother in the U.S. Major Baehr and 942 other prisoners of war died on 15 Dec 44 when the prison ship they were on was bombed and sunk in Subic Bay. Hereinafter cited as Baehr's Letters.

to the Chicago Daily News, began "A Bomber for Bataan Fund." To spark the drive, the Bataan defenders adopted a slogan "Better any one bomber, than be buried on Bataan," and even offered their pay for the purchase of a bomber."<sup>1</sup>

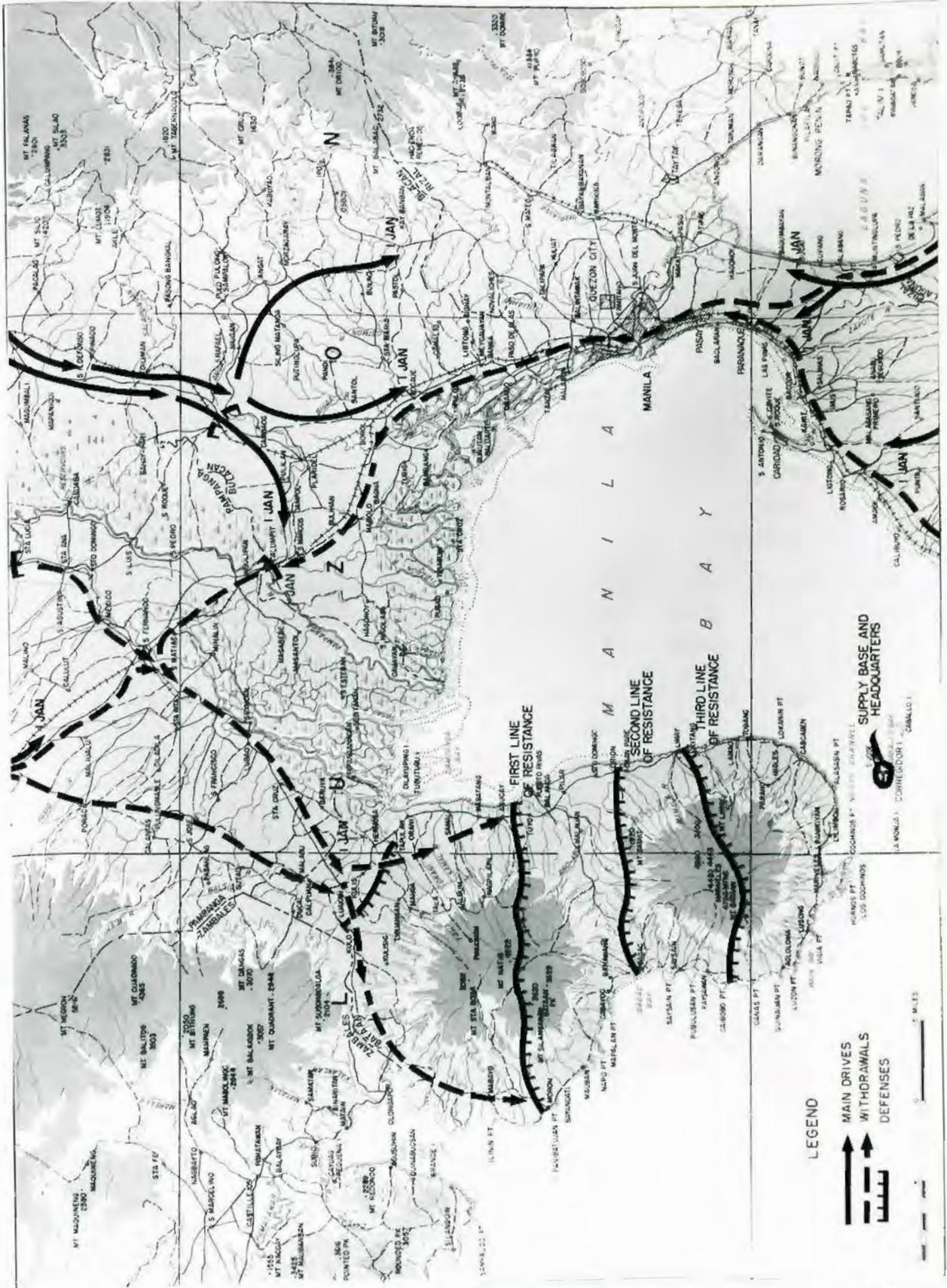
While his troops were digging in on Bataan, MacArthur, to tighten his defense and to gain greater effectiveness from his existing manpower and equipment, conducted a sweeping reorganization of his defense posture on Bataan. The peninsula was divided into east and west sectors and a Service Command Area south of the Mariveles Mountains. The east sector was designated as I Corps and placed under the command of Wainwright, one of the most able commanders in the Far East. The west sector designated as II Corps was headed by Parker, and in command of the Service Command was Brig. General Allan C. McBride. With these new changes and with his several lines of defense, MacArthur now had a well established defense in depth (Map 3).

On 10 January, MacArthur made an inspection tour of the battle position of his units along the main line of defense on Bataan. This was also the day chosen by Homma to have surrender messages dropped from the air behind the American lines. The messages warned MacArthur that if he did not surrender, "our offensive will be continued with inexorable force."<sup>2</sup> The message went unanswered. After his tour of inspection MacArthur returned to his labyrinthine headquarters

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<sup>1</sup>26 February 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 269.



Source: Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 13.

MAP 3

Route of Strategic Withdrawal to Bataan

in the Malinta Hill on Corregidor. It was from here that he directed the over-all operations of his defense.

On that same day a third major blow was struck at the American-Filipino cause when the Japanese captured Olangapo, an important submarine base on the Bataan peninsula sixty miles from Manila. It was the second key point in the defense of the Philippines. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that it had been "captured without a struggle."<sup>1</sup> The loss was a triple blow to MacArthur. In the first place, it eliminated the last effective port on Luzon through which American reinforcements could enter Luzon; secondly, it became an important base for the Japanese through which they could pour men and supplies; and, thirdly, it gave the Japanese command of Ft. Wint, Little Corregidor, which was captured on 12 January and shortly used by them as a formidable base to harass the defenders' left flank.

On 11 and 12 January, the Japanese made repeated but unsuccessful banzai attacks on the American-Filipino lines. Firing with uncanny accuracy, the American artillery shattered each screaming wave as it charged the strongly entrenched defenders. A few attackers succeeded in penetrating the defending lines, but on the following day they were flushed out of their concealments and destroyed one by one, very often in grisly hand-to-hand combat.<sup>2</sup> Gratifying as the victory was, it cost the Americans dearly. While the Japanese could replace their casualties, the American-Filipino defenders could not.

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<sup>1</sup>12 January 1942, pp. 1, 2. <sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 270.

Although elated and paying tribute to the tactical genius of MacArthur, the majority of the American press cautioned against over-optimism and stressed that at best, this victory was only a delaying tactic.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the Minneapolis Star Journal, prematurely optimistic, concluded that "it is far too early to give up the Philippines as wholly lost."<sup>2</sup>

During the confusion of these early battles MacArthur, on 15 January, issued a very controversial message:

. . . Help is on the way. Thousands of troops and hundreds of planes are being dispatched. The exact time of arrival is unknown as they will have to fight their way through.

. . . No further retreat is possible, our supplies are ample, and it is imperative to hold until aid has arrived.<sup>3</sup>

The message was intended to whip up the flagging spirits of the tired defenders. To the majority of the Filipinos it acted as an inspiration and aroused great enthusiasm, but when later corrected, "the depression was intensified."<sup>4</sup>

As the resistance on the Filipino home front stiffened, the Japanese, with a tendency at times to act impulsively, countered it with stronger punitive measures. The Philadelphia Inquirer related the story under two bold captions. The first stated: "Japs in Manila Copy German Hostage Order." The second read: "Threatens 10

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<sup>1</sup>See the Washington Post, Cleveland Plain Dealer and New York Times of 14 January 1942, as well as many others.

<sup>2</sup>15 January 1942, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Hostages for every Jap Soldier or Civilian Harmed,"<sup>1</sup> In the south, the Miami Herald paralleled the last Tokyo action as one "From the Master's Book."<sup>2</sup> In the mid-west area, the Minneapolis Star Journal saw it as an admission that guerrillas were carrying out MacArthur's orders.<sup>3</sup>

The severity of the Japanese countermeasures was in sharp contrast to the favorable terms used in earlier leaflets when the Japanese promised freedom from oppression. This turn-about represented to the St. Louis Post Dispatch an excellent indicator of how much success the Japanese were enjoying in their efforts to wean the Filipino citizen from the Americans.<sup>4</sup> In a subsequent article, the Dispatch declared that "experiences through the centuries had taught the Filipinos to meet the "Nipponese benevolence with sharpened bolos,"<sup>5</sup>

In looking to America for help, MacArthur and his American-Filipino defenders were counting on the efficiency and the determination of the American worker and on America's vast industrial resources and mass production techniques to provide them with the striking power they so desperately needed to defeat the Japanese. The Times-Picayune of New Orleans remarked that just "one month's output of American planes would have made a big difference in dislodging the Japanese

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<sup>1</sup>15 January 1942, p. 1.    <sup>2</sup>16 January 1942, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>15 January 1942, p. 15.    <sup>4</sup>24 January 1942, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

invaders."<sup>1</sup> The Chicago Herald-American also scored the same point when it stated that "willingness to die was not enough." It went on to add that the defenders were not seeking or asking for relief from the rigors of war or from the constant strain and suffering of the gruelling daily battle. What they wanted, said the Herald-American, was "the equipment to enable them to make their efforts and their sacrifices successful."<sup>2</sup> But even these hopes were shattered, for on the day that MacArthur issued his controversial message the entire war effort of the United States was condemned.

On 15 January, Senator Harry S. Truman (D-Mo.), head of a Senate Investigating Committee, denounced the war effort of the Administration, the Navy, the Army, dollar-a-year men, big business, lobbyists, labor, and about every defense office and agency in and out of Washington for the lag in war production. The report implied that the whole war effort to date was a miserable failure; in short, a complete mess. The press saw in the report a damning indictment against the administration and a reason why supplies were not getting to MacArthur.

In a strongly worded editorial, the Arkansas Democrat called attention to the repeated charges that had been made against our leaders and others in our 1941 effort. It then went on to say: "If inefficiency, outright stupidity, could be classed as a felony, our jails would be populated with 'big shots' in and out of the armed services,

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<sup>1</sup>1 March 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>2 April 1942, p. 1.

as well as in the seats of the mighty of both business and labor."<sup>1</sup>

In relating the administration's failure to MacArthur's predicament the Denver Post stated: "This report shows why the Japanese had superiority ever since they started the war in the Pacific, and it shows why MacArthur has been seriously handicapped in his heroic defense of the Philippines."<sup>2</sup> Both editorials typified the reaction of the press to the Truman report. The critical appraisal made by the newspapers of the Truman disclosure succeeded in stirring up a hornet's nest throughout the country.

As if one controversy were not enough, the Salt Lake Tribune added fuel to a second when its war analyst, Constantine Brown, a consistent supporter of MacArthur, stated: "The first concern of the United States is the Pacific, not the Atlantic. It seems strange that while we think in grandiose terms of striking Hitler, we are sacrificing American-Filipino troops in Luzon without attempting to send them help."<sup>3</sup> Brown's report reviewing the needs of both theaters was critical of America's delay in starting a Pacific offensive. Since Japan proved stronger than expected, he suggested a major allied operation in the Pacific to be followed later by a European effort. This was one idea that a "Europe First" oriented administration would not accept.

MacArthur always believed that the "Europe First" concept adopted by Washington and London was a blind and disastrous one. He

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<sup>1</sup>16 January 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>15 January 1942, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>18 January 1942, p. 20B.

in turn sought the broadest possible strategy that would keep our position strong in Asia.<sup>1</sup> He never became reconciled to its credo nor to the people who worshipped at its shrine. To him, "Washington's every application of that strategy was taken as a vindicative personal thrust."<sup>2</sup>

Roosevelt, the co-author of the allied global strategy, was strongly opposed to an all-out American effort in the Pacific. Without examining all strategical and tactical implications, he believed that "A defeat of Germany means the defeat of Japan, probably without firing a shot or losing a life."<sup>3</sup> Being about 10,000 miles away, official Washington could make these decisions with detachment.

By mid-winter of 1942 some editors began to question the logic of sending the American Navy across the Pacific and through enemy controlled waters to the Philippines. Yet most of them had no illusion that sooner or later a greater emphasis would have to be placed on the Pacific conflict and an extensive effort made there to halt the Japanese juggernaut before it was too late. The American public and Congress, however, more susceptible to the emotional outcries from Bataan, persisted in their demands that every effort be made to send aid to MacArthur and his defenders. One out of three letters to Congress, reported

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<sup>1</sup>Albert C. Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports, (New York: Holt, 1958), p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>Albert R. Buchanan, The U. S. and W. W. II, (New York: Harper-Row Inc., 1946), p. 218.

<sup>3</sup>Matloff, Strategic Planning, pp. 272-73.

the Wyoming State Tribune, asked: "Why don't we send aid to Mac-Arthur?"<sup>1</sup>

Those of the nation's press cautioning against any rash action to send the Navy out into enemy controlled waters tried to impress on their readers why there was no simple solution to this complex problem. The Providence Journal noted that because of the distances involved, two ships would be required for every one in the Atlantic, and we did not have that many ships.<sup>2</sup> The Newark Star-Ledger stressed the need of air power to protect the fleet, for without such a cover the fleet was in mortal danger.<sup>3</sup> The Wheeling News-Register cautioned that the desire for revenge was not enough and in recapping the fuel requirement for a battle force, the Register commented on its need to refuel.<sup>4</sup> The Arkansas Democrat agreed with the Register, remarking that it would require several refuelings and added "our lack of refueling bases is no secret."<sup>5</sup> The Dallas Morning News suggested to its readers to go to the maps for a better understanding of the importance of the Japanese strategic positions in the Pacific. The reason for this change of attitude was that many editors were convinced that naval vessels within reach of land based air power were in mortal danger. To

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<sup>1</sup>27 January 1942, p. 4.      <sup>2</sup>31 December 1941, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>6 January 1942, p. 10.      <sup>4</sup>11 January 1942, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>7 February 1942, p. Four II. The maximum operational range of a battle force equalled, at this time, 2,500 to 3,000 miles (Map 1).

these editors, air power, because of its great flexibility of use, unequalled mobility, and terrific destructive power, had a quality all its own that could not be matched by any other weapon of war.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, there still remained a few editors who were convinced that aid had to be sent to the Philippines regardless of the cost. The Richmond Times-Dispatch was of the opinion that the Navy should collect ships and give battle to the Japanese. To this paper, victory was not the issue. If the Americans won, the Japanese threat would be eliminated and their armies isolated. If the Japanese won, the continental United States could not be blockaded and the consequence of such a defeat would not be vital.<sup>2</sup>

The clamor for aid to MacArthur was further enhanced on 28 January when banner headlines informed the American public that "An American Expeditionary Force" had landed in Ireland. The Bismarck Tribune asked: "Why are we sending troops to the British Islands where they are not needed rather than to the Far East where they are needed and the fighting is?"<sup>3</sup> It also urged the people to express their disapproval of our leaders' war efforts to date. The Denver Post questioned a policy which produced "all kinds of long range planning, but a sickening lack of immediate fighting," and one which allowed needed reinforcements to go to Europe "while only congratulations were sent to our

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<sup>1</sup>The fear of air power was due to Japan's spectacular successes with its air force in the Pacific.

<sup>2</sup>3 January 1942, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>19 February 1942, p. 4.

Pacific fighters who are in dire straits."<sup>1</sup>

Several other newspapers saw the shipment of troops to Ireland as a move to give Winston Churchill, England's Prime Minister and co-author of the "Europe First" concept, moral support in strengthening his political position in Great Britain.<sup>2</sup> While the Indianapolis Star in its editorial of 28 January questioned the allied logic in "packing the British island with soldiers," the Philadelphia Inquirer, in turn, issued a strong condemnation of the basic strategy followed by Washington and London. In an editorial which stressed that "our primary fighting is in the Pacific," the Inquirer denounced the Washington strategy as being nothing more than a device "aimed at covering rat-holes here, there, and everywhere, rather than assume the initiative and smash the rats themselves." Then in a cutting slash at Great Britain it added: "While England had crisis on top of crisis elsewhere, it kept from 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 men at home as a protection against invasion."<sup>3</sup>

Five days earlier, on 23 January, the Japanese began a series of landings behind the defenders' lines on the southwest coast of Bataan in the vicinity of Mariveles.<sup>4</sup> The third and last of the landings was

<sup>1</sup>29 January 1942, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Burlington Free Press, Newark Star Journal, among many.

<sup>3</sup>6 February 1942, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Known as the Battle of the Points. They took place at Longoskawayan, Quinauan, and Anyasan.

made on the night of 1-2 February. A mixed United States force of army, navy, marines, and air force troops was quickly assembled and placed under the command of Brigadier General Clyde A. Shelleck. Although the defenders could not prevent the landings, they did succeed in containing the invaders and finally destroying all remnants by 15 February. Assisting the defenders were the big guns from Corregidor whose 670 pound shells struck terror in the hearts of the Japanese troops unfortunate enough to be in the impact area. The American press reported several of these local skirmishes as major victories.

The Philadelphia Inquirer was not alone among the nation's press in reporting a premature victory on 3 February under the caption, "Another Brilliant Victory for MacArthur."<sup>1</sup> In the mid-west, the Chicago Daily News reported the local engagements under the heading, "Crush Mighty Attack in Bataan."<sup>2</sup> Further west, the Lawrence Daily Journal reported, "Tributes to Captives," and then added: "The enemy although employing its best trained shock troops had been mastered and destroyed."<sup>3</sup>

Although the nation's newspapers were premature in their victory claims, the headlines did pay deserving tributes to the defenders who neither asked nor gave quarters, and whose failure would have resulted in a complete collapse of the Bataan defense as early as the first week of February. In three weeks of fighting, where success was

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<sup>1</sup>3 February 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>3 February 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>2 February 1942, p. 1.

very often measured in feet and yards, the defenders succeeded in destroying about 900 Japanese at a cost to themselves of "70 killed and 100 wounded."<sup>1</sup> It was a small price to pay in view of the possible consequences if the invasion had succeeded.

Even as the fight for the southwest coast was taking place, an equally desperate battle was being fought behind the main battle line for the control of several important road junctions.<sup>2</sup> Involved were 1,000 Japanese troops of the 20th Infantry. When the battle ended on 17 February the Japanese had lost approximately 625 men. They had breached the mainline of defense at one point but were never able to capitalize fully on their temporary success. A strong counterattack by the defenders had pinched off the enemy and pocketed them until they could be destroyed in detail.

One of the most dramatic stories to come out of this epic involved the fierce Igorots of North Luzon. The Philadelphia Inquirer in its leader for a page one story reported the Igorots as "Riding to Instant Death Atop Tanks." They clung to "the jolting turrets, . . . screamed blood chilling battle cries and held the line against fierce Japanese assaults." In telling the story to newsmen, MacArthur was quoted as saying, "Gentlemen, when you tell this story stand in tribute to the gallant Igorots."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 324.

<sup>2</sup>For a detailed account see Morton, Philippines, pp. 325-346.

<sup>3</sup>23 February 1942, p. 1.

The New York Times was closer to the truth when it reported that the tanks would have been lost and useless in the jungle maze without the Igorots. In riding on top of the tanks, the fearless Igorots acted as the eyes of the tankers and helped guide them by use of sticks. In quoting the Times, Morton expressed the opinion that the Japanese had already started to withdraw to their own lines after failing to capture the important road junctions.<sup>1</sup>

In analyzing the brilliant defense of Bataan, the Cleveland Plain Dealer while giving due credit to MacArthur also put in a plug for "the Filipino fighting man who contributed much of the heart and brawn" for the campaign.<sup>2</sup> When Wainwright was asked to express his opinion of the Filipino troops, he stated: "These troops are toughening into real soldiers; with 40,000 trained men either American or Filipino, we would chase the Japanese into the sea."<sup>3</sup>

The excessive losses suffered by the Japanese from both operations and their failure to make any appreciable gains on Bataan finally forced Homma to pull back his troops and request reinforcements from Tokyo.<sup>4</sup> It was this decision which brought a comparative lull over Bataan that lasted through most of March. It was also during this lull that one of the wildest rumors of the Pacific conflict developed. Homma

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 346. <sup>2</sup>31 January 1942, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, 10 February 1942, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>14th Army losses between 9 January and 8 February were 6984. Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, II, Part I, 108.

was reported to have committed suicide because of his failure to defeat MacArthur. These repeated failures, reported the majority of the press, drove Homma to commit hari kiri in MacArthur's penthouse apartment.<sup>1</sup> It was just another myth to be added to MacArthur's growing collection and made him loom even greater in the eyes of the Filipinos. The story was never retracted and Homma lived to be tried as a war criminal in 1946. Homma's replacement was reported to be the "Conqueror of Singapore," Lieutenant General Tomoyuki Yamashita.

On 14 February, in a radio speech to the American people President Roosevelt suggested that they think in terms of all peoples and continents, not countries. This speech touched off a new round of criticism from the press. In the west, the Denver Post expressed the most representative view:

This is a beautiful and unselfish statement; unfortunately, this is not a beautiful world. If the American people do not think First, Last, and All the time in terms of the U.S. who else is going to look out for our interests.

We better take a leaf from Churchill's book, he thinks solely in terms of what is best for England. Instead of dividing our forces between two wars and making no appreciable progress in either of them, let us concentrate on our own war.<sup>2</sup>

The St. Louis Post Dispatch agreed that the people had a right to be impatient and no longer satisfied with the answers that were coming from Washington because "many of the shallow answers proved misleading or downright untrue. The bedlam of confusion, incompetence

<sup>1</sup>See the Newark Star-Ledger, 10 March 1942, p. 10 for example.

<sup>2</sup>16 February 1942, p. 2.



General Douglas MacArthur



Major Gen. J. M. Wainwright



Lieut. Gen. Masaharu Homma  
Associated Press



Lieut. Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita

Source: Associated Press releases.

and waste at Washington," the paper remarked, "reechoes throughout the world."<sup>1</sup>

In supporting the public's right to dissent even in war time, the Washington Post in the nation's capital stated:

The public is clamoring for more sea and air action and for reinforcements for MacArthur and are not acting purely from emotional basis. Such demands have their roots in American offensive tradition. The public can hardly be blamed for being bewildered and indignant that there is no evidence of our living up to tradition.<sup>2</sup>

The amount of criticism against the President's policy on this one issue was a clear indication that neither the nation nor a majority of the press were ready to accept a strategy just because the President wanted it.

On 23 February an indignant President returned to the nation's radio networks to blast his critics and denounce enemy propagandists, rumor mongers, and poison peddlers.<sup>3</sup> He implied that some reinforcements had been sent to MacArthur. The President denied that the raid on Pearl Harbor was responsible for the situation in the Philippines. He indicated that even if an attack had not been made, the sending of the fleet through thousands of miles of enemy invested waters would have been a hopeless operation. The President, however, did not indicate how the fleet would have been used if it had not been attacked, but his stand on the "Europe First" policy would not make the answer difficult to find. Actually, his statement was a contradiction

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<sup>1</sup>18 February 1942, pp. 1C, 3C. <sup>2</sup>20 February 1942, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, 24 February 1942, pp. 1, 4.

of the Pacific war plans.<sup>1</sup>

The President's speech was given headline space by most newspapers. The New York Times, a constant supporter of the President's policies, headlined the speech across eight columns in bold black capitalized letters but sandwiched in between two similarly printed headlines reflecting the war news of the day:

SUBMARINES SHELL CALIFORNIA OIL PLANT:  
ROOSEVELT SEES ALLIES ON THE OFFENSIVE:  
JAPANESE BALI INVASION FLEET SMASHED<sup>2</sup>

In its editorial of the same day the Times referred to the President as a "citizen of the world" and added that "the U.S. was fortunate to have such an experienced leader." In the Times, Roosevelt found one of his few gratifying supporters which often urged its readers to give the President and his administration's war policies full support.

Over the din of the arguments for and against the administration's strategy there now began to emerge a stronger demand to save MacArthur by getting him out of the Philippines. Commented the Wyoming State Tribune: "The public is amazed, disillusioned and alarmed by the ineptness, muddling incompetency in the nation's war machine." In suggesting that MacArthur be placed in supreme command of the armed force it added: "Americans will have reason to hope that skill,

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<sup>1</sup>Inherent in all war plans for the Pacific was the policy that the U. S. Navy would attempt to keep the communication lines open to the Philippines, and convoy reinforcements and supplies to the islands at the first opportunity.

<sup>2</sup>24 February 1942, pp. 1, 4.

not bungling and confusion, will direct their efforts."<sup>1</sup>

In concurring with the Wyoming State Tribune's recommendation, the Washington Post suggested that MacArthur and his men be rescued and deployed to other areas where they could be of great help to the Allies. Then it went on to say that "a large share of the responsibility for our disappointing performance rested with the Army and Navy."<sup>2</sup> The Albuquerque Journal was of the opinion that the decision to leave the Philippines should not be left to the General, because MacArthur, involved in a life and death struggle on Bataan, had no way of knowing the full facts, so the burden of deciding should be left to Washington.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>15 February 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>20 February 1942, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>21 February 1942, p. 1.

## CHAPTER V

### CHANGE OF COMMAND

#### Orders to Australia

MacArthur's over-all defensive position on Bataan, including the bay forts, never seemed more favorable than it was at the middle of February. The battles of the points had been won, the pockets cleared, and a frustrated enemy forced to retreat and lick his wounds. An uneasy lull had descended over the battlefield. Yet to the military experts and strategists in Washington, it was clear that despite the heroism and gallantry of the American-Filipino troops the Japanese could not be denied the final victory. This was also obvious to MacArthur who reported to Washington that unless help was forthcoming, "there is no denying the fact that we are near done."<sup>1</sup>

Any hope in the Philippines that the basic Washington-London strategy might change was quickly dispelled on 1 March when the President informed the nation that the Pacific war as a whole would have to be fought and won by a process of attrition against the Japanese. Nothing, the President implied, not even the fall of Singapore nor the loss of American lives and possessions in the Pacific would induce him to

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<sup>1</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 354.

revise his basic strategy.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, the Filipino's loyalty to America remained strong and resistance against the Japanese continued widespread within all levels of Filipino society. President Quezon urged the Filipinos to have faith in their soldiers in the field and above all "to trust America and our beloved leader--President Roosevelt."<sup>2</sup> This sentiment may have been an undeserved confidence.

The extent of their unrest and response to the pleas of their President was underscored several days later when the Japanese, fearing a popular revolt, ordered the surrender of bolos, farm tools, and other weapons. This action may have been motivated, said the Miami Herald, by the Moros' pledge "to help the United States drive the Japanese out of the Philippines."<sup>3</sup> Ten thousand Moros had sworn on the Koran to fight as one people and to never lay down their swords until the Japanese were ejected.

When MacArthur was informed of this mass manifestation of faith he responded with poetic effusion to suit the occasion:

No more inspiring or significant incident has occurred in the mighty struggles that now engulf the world than the magnificent stand they have taken. It covers them with immortal glory and elevates them to the highest pinnacle of spiritual

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<sup>1</sup>See for example, San Francisco Chronicle, 1 March 1942, p. 1, for an excellent consensus of the nation's press.

<sup>2</sup>Miami Herald, 2 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>7 March 1942, p. 1.

grandeur.<sup>1</sup>

The nation's press attributed such actions and the gallant stand made by the Filipino troops to MacArthur's ability to instill in the Filipino his own fiery spirit. It was, the press remarked, a response in kind for the faith and confidence that he had in the Filipinos, particularly in his native troops. Although deprived of essential training, his "two for a nickel" Filipino troops had become a match for the more combat hardened Japanese.

The Wyoming State Tribune was quick to observe in MacArthur's conduct of the war tangible advantages that extended far beyond the battlefield, particularly in the field of human relationships. In contrasting his feat with that of the United States in this area, the paper had this to say:

The brave general's operation in the field of propaganda is more important to the democratic nations than is generally realized. So long as he can keep alive the spirit of revolt and resistance among the vanquished peoples, it will be difficult for the invaders to cash in fully on their victories.<sup>2</sup>

In contrasting the feelings of the Filipinos for both MacArthur and Roosevelt the St. Louis Post noted that while they respected Roosevelt as a forceful leader, their feeling for MacArthur was reverential. They believed in the impregnability of the MacArthur line and clung to the view that "the man has not been born who can defeat

<sup>1</sup>This story made headlines in most papers reviewed. See, among others, the New York Times, Cleveland Plain Dealer, 3 March 1942.

<sup>2</sup>11 March 1942, p. 4.

MacArthur, "<sup>1</sup> particularly a Japanese. This latter point became a fixation in the minds of many allied leaders and peoples in the Pacific and in the United States.

Nor were the Filipinos alone in their high regard for MacArthur. The Dutch, reported the Detroit Free Press, "are clamoring for MacArthur's withdrawal from Luzon to head the Pacific Allies."<sup>2</sup> The Washington Post strongly recommended that both MacArthur and his fighting men, Americans and Filipinos alike, be rescued and deployed to other areas where they could be of great help to the Allies.<sup>3</sup>

Another strong MacArthur supporter was the Nashville Banner which strongly urged that MacArthur be made the new Allied Chief in the Pacific. The Banner remarked that the Australians looked upon MacArthur "as an individual with the qualifications and qualities needed to make a man acceptable to their country," and one who was "a terror to the Japanese and a pick-me-up to the morale of the free world."<sup>4</sup>

In Honolulu the feeling also existed the MacArthur was the logical choice for supreme commander in the Pacific. The Honolulu Star-Bulletin stated: "All cheering indicates the man to lead . . . an offensive against the Japanese and be generalissimo is MacArthur." The Star-Bulletin believed that MacArthur's leadership would succeed in rallying all the productive genius and ability of the United States to

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<sup>1</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, 3 April 1942, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>15 February 1942, p. 3C.      <sup>3</sup>20 February 1942, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup>2 March 1942, p. 1.

supply ships, planes, men, and munitions. MacArthur was expected to fire the "imagination and enthusiasm of his fellow citizen and inspire the worker to step faster, work harder and labor a little longer for a man who had their confidence and admiration."<sup>1</sup> The strong demand for MacArthur to lead the Pacific effort was a good indication of how deeply he had captured the public's imagination at home and abroad.

As the Japanese invader penetrated further and further south, a great fear and uneasiness began to grip the Pacific Allies, particularly during the first week of March when Java was about to fall. A sobering and critical analysis of the prevailing conditions by the press disclosed a pessimistic view about any relief for Bataan.<sup>2</sup> Such pessimism was based on the fact that the Philippines were completely surrounded by Japanese forces and that not a single base within 2,000 miles of the Philippines was occupied by allied forces.

This feeling of pessimism and the apprehension over the fate of Java reached deep into the jungles of Bataan and was shared by the American-Filipino defenders. The feeling among the troops, remarked Major Baehr, was that "the outcome in Java would have a strong impact on our own fate. Everyone is watching what's going on Java way."<sup>3</sup> Despite this pessimism, the Philippines remained the only beacon still

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<sup>1</sup>7 March 1942, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Among many, Newark Star Ledger, 10 March 1942, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Baehr's Letters, 6 March 1942.

shining bright and clear out of the turbulent Southwest Pacific. In a sea of despair it had become a symbol of tenacity, resourcefulness, and heroism.

After reviewing the pros and cons of MacArthur leaving the Philippines, some American newspapers thought that the men themselves were convinced that he should move elsewhere--most likely Australia--from where he could start a new offensive and lead his men to victory.<sup>1</sup>

MacArthur's evacuation from Luzon was an overriding issue not only to the leaders and peoples of the southwest Pacific but also to the leaders in Washington. Unknown to the nation's press was the fact that action had already been taken at the highest Washington level to transfer MacArthur out of the Philippines. The decision, based on military requirements and not on public opinion, was made by President Roosevelt on 22 February when he ordered MacArthur to proceed to Australia.

When MacArthur received the presidential order he requested and received permission to remain at his post until he felt the time was ripe for his departure. He believed that a sudden departure on his part would prove harmful to the American cause in the Philippines. But on 12 March, MacArthur thought the time had arrived for his departure and gave up his command on Luzon to General Wainwright who would

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<sup>1</sup>Newark Star Ledger, 10 March 1942, p. 10.

be left to close out the final phase of a gallant but futile defense.<sup>1</sup>

Before MacArthur left the Philippines, his estimate of the situation led him to reorganize the command structure of USAFFE and to develop plans for future tactical operations on Bataan. The forces in the Philippines were divided into four commands: the Visayan Force, Mindanao Force, Harbor Defense Force, and the Luzon Force.<sup>2</sup> The proposed changes would not be implemented until after MacArthur's departure from the Philippines. The most important aspect of MacArthur's command change was the retention of the over-all command of the Philippines forces in his own hands. He intended to maintain his control over the forces in the Philippines through a deputy chief, Brigadier General Lewis C. Beebe, who would remain on Corregidor and act as his representative. This arrangement made Wainwright, a senior officer, a subordinate to MacArthur's representative on Corregidor.

MacArthur's strategy for the Philippines envisaged first, "a fight to the finish"; second, "an attempt to open a supply line from the southern portion of the Philippines"; and third, "to conduct a counter-attack to capture the enemy base at Subic Bay."<sup>3</sup> MacArthur was

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<sup>1</sup>On 9 March, MacArthur briefed Wainwright on the over-all situation. The order of battle that he left with Wainwright ruled out any idea of surrender except on the field of battle. It was to be a fight to the end.

<sup>2</sup>MacArthur's reason for this change was to prevent the complete surrender of all commands by any one headquarters in the Philippines.

<sup>3</sup>Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, I, 20, 21.

convinced that if the defenders held out long enough America would send in supplies and reinforcements. He was completely opposed under any circumstances or conditions to the ultimate capitulation of the Philippine forces. If the Philippine command had to be destroyed, it would have to be on the battle field after destroying as many of the enemy as possible.<sup>1</sup>

When General Marshall in Washington was informed of MacArthur's action he received permission from the President to revoke the orders because of their undesirable effect on Wainwright and on the morale of the command. The President sent a message to MacArthur which left no doubts that Washington wanted Wainwright to assume full command of the Philippine forces.<sup>2</sup> MacArthur voiced no objection to the President's request. While the President's and Marshall's decision had merit, it proved unsound, for no consideration was given to the unique military situation in the Philippines. Its consequences at a later date were to prove tragic for the defenders on Bataan. MacArthur's plan to continue the defense effort with a hard core of guerrilla fighters had been compromised.

Mindanao, for all practical purposes, was closer to Australia than it was to Bataan. The southern islands of the Visgayan-Mindanao group were also out of the mainstream of the Philippine battle and added nothing to the defense of Luzon or Bataan. Nor were Bataan and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup>Radio, Marshall to MacArthur, No. 810, 22 Mar 42; quoted in Morton, Philippines, 365. See pp. 364-65 for other messages.

Corregidor, both involved in a life and death struggle, in any position to provide even minimal aid to the forces outside its immediate area.

But Marshall, preoccupied as he was with global problems of greater magnitude, could not be expected to analyze at this time either the local situation or the desirability of a divided command in the event of a defeat even though it had been expected by official Washington and was now overdue.

In failing to present his plans to Washington for consideration, MacArthur showed a lack of judgment and erred seriously. His unilateral action was contrary to established War Department policies. As a former Army Chief of Staff, MacArthur was aware of this and should have informed Marshall of his plans before he left Corregidor for Australia, not after he arrived in Australia.

Nothing could have been more stimulating and pleasing to the American press and the nation than the news that MacArthur and a small staff were in Australia and of his appointment as the United Nations Commander for the Southwest Pacific Area. MacArthur viewed his successful flight through the Japanese blockade as a vindication of his firm conviction that the Japanese blockade could be breached.

Though justified in the early phase of the conflict when the situation was still fluid and called for strong determination and an adventurous spirit, these convictions were now less than valid. To assume that conditions in March were just as favorable, irrespective of his successful breakthrough, was to ignore reality. MacArthur's success with

several torpedo boats was not a true test of the effectiveness of the Japanese blockade. A slow and hard to maneuver freighter with a high silhouette is a poor substitute for a fast and highly maneuverable torpedo boat to break through a naval blockade.

MacArthur's flight from Corregidor had started on 11 March, and included in his group of twenty-one people were his wife, his son, and his son's Chinese nurse. The many stories and myths which developed around this episode also embellished the MacArthur legend. For example, he was reported to have loaded the PT boats with all kinds of personal belongings. In view of the limited space and the number of people in his party, MacArthur limited himself and his family to the same weight as other members of his party. The group<sup>1</sup> arrived in Mindanao on 14 March and was escorted to Del Monte airfield<sup>2</sup> where MacArthur expected to find three planes.

Waiting on the air strip was only one of the three B-17's that MacArthur had expected. According to MacArthur the plane was so operationally deficient that he rejected any idea of using it to carry passengers. He was so incensed at the affront that he radioed General Marshall in Washington for the best three planes in the United States or Hawaii, with complete and adequate crews. "To attempt such a

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<sup>1</sup>For a complete list see Morton, Philippines, p. 359. The officers and crews of the four PT boats were granted Silver Stars.

<sup>2</sup>MacArthur and his group were met by Major General William Sharp, the commander of the Mindanao force.

desperate and important trip with inadequate equipment," he said, "would consign the whole party to death."<sup>1</sup>

When the planes finally arrived the group took off for Australia on a flight which the New York Times incorrectly described as "soaring over 2,000 miles of the hottest fighting areas in the Southwest Pacific."<sup>2</sup> The Boston Globe called the flight from Luzon "seven days of death defying travel."<sup>3</sup>

In commenting on MacArthur's breakthrough, several of the nation's newspapers passed judgment on the effectiveness of the Japanese blockade. The San Francisco Chronicle was of the opinion that the Japanese hold of the Philippines was slight: "All Japan has been able to hold are ports and portions of the periphery of the principal islands. Seventy-five per cent of the Philippines is still held by the American-Filipino troops."<sup>4</sup> Clarke Lee, an Associated Press war correspondent writing for the Miami Herald, reported that he had "traveled hundred of miles over water and by car without sighting a single plane, warship, or soldier."<sup>5</sup> However, the majority of the nation's press, caught up in the drama of MacArthur's arrival in Australia, paid little attention to these remarks.

MacArthur's transfer to Australia met with the unanimous

<sup>1</sup>Radio, MacArthur to Marshall, No. 482, 14 Mar 42, WDCSA 370.05. Quoted in Morton, Philippines, p. 360.

<sup>2</sup>18 March 1942, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>3</sup>19 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>19 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>3 April 1942, p. 2.

approval of almost all of the nation's press. Virtually every paper regarded MacArthur's appointment as supreme commander as a high tribute to one of the most outstanding soldiers in military history. His dramatic dash through enemy lines, his safe arrival in Australia, and his appointment as United Nations Commander of the Southwest Pacific Area became one of the greatest human-interest stories of World War II. It was in the press parlance, a "Big" story, and it filled the headlines of the nation's press for several days.

When MacArthur and his party landed in Australia on 17 March he was greeted by countless Australians, and before boarding a train at Adelaide, he told the cheering throng:

The President of the United States ordered me to break through the Japanese lines . . . for the purpose, as I understand it, of organizing the American offensive against the Japanese. A primary purpose is the relief of the Philippines.

And then he added the three words that were directed to the defenders in the foxholes of Bataan, to the troops, sailors, and nurses on Corregidor, and to the millions of Filipinos--"I shall return."<sup>1</sup>

These words had an enormous impact on the peoples of the free world everywhere and stirred their imagination because of its message of hope. It was a pledge to the Filipino people in their hour of darkness that the enemy would be driven from their shores. It became a symbol and battle cry for the guerrilla movement and the Filipino fighting man. It was etched on walls, in the beach sands, and in the streets of the

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<sup>1</sup>See, among many others, the New York Times, 21 March 1942.

towns and the cities of the islands. It reminded the Japanese of what the future held for them. The words could not be forgotten for they were propagandized and perpetuated by Colonel Carlos Romulo, the newscaster for Corregidor's "Voice of Freedom."

While the emotional, black capitalized headlines of the American press screamed out the electrifying news of MacArthur's breakthrough from the Philippines, the more subdued editorials attempted to interpret the significance of his arrival in Australia. The Burlington Free Press believed that MacArthur was risking his military reputation on a tremendous gamble. It pointed out that the big gamble was whether troops and equipment would reach him fast enough.

The Nebraska State Journal lauded MacArthur and thought his transfer would give the war in the Pacific a shot in the arm:

The gallant general, the best the United States has put into the field, has been moved from a hopeless trap in Bataan. More than that, it will give the Allied cause in the South Pacific a stimulus that few other single developments could have given.<sup>1</sup>

The Wheeling News-Register asked the public to give MacArthur a chance. Irrespective of his extraordinary stand against the Japanese, this paper did not expect him to reverse the tragic events of the past and put the enemy to rout immediately. In order to accomplish this feat, the News-Register emphasized, he would need men, ships, planes, and equipment, and that the people who were predicting that MacArthur would carry the fight to the Japanese were "only expressing

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<sup>1</sup>18 March 1942, p. 8.

a hope."<sup>1</sup> This paper thought that the choice of MacArthur as supreme commander would have a stabilizing and unifying effect on the American people because in their hearts he would be the last man they would let down.

The Arkansas Democrat knew of no other move that could have been made which would have met with more universal approval. Not only was he greatly esteemed in England and Australia, but nowhere was "he more admired as a true fighting man than in his own country." The Democrat saw the transfer as contributing "to the morale of all nations fighting the Axis partners." As a warning to the Japanese commanders on Bataan, this paper advised them not to get too complacent and cocky and think that the Filipino would fold up. "General Wainwright is a pretty tough hombre himself and knows the Philippines almost as well as MacArthur."<sup>2</sup>

According to the Los Angeles Times, perfection has its own reward and "the reward of outstanding performance in a tough assignment is frequently a tougher one." Then it went on to say that there was no question that MacArthur was capable of doing a good job. The Times did see a danger in expecting the new chief to perform miracles, and miracles, it pointed out, can only be performed with the ingredients of war--men, ships, guns, tanks, planes, and appropriations. "The best way to show our gratitude to MacArthur," it remarked, "is to back

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<sup>1</sup>18 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>18 March 1942, p. 6.

him all the way."<sup>1</sup>

The Des Moines Register thought MacArthur was successful in the Philippines "because he knew when to withdraw and where to withdraw, and he did not permit the enemy to dictate when and where he should finally stand."<sup>2</sup> In scoring this same point the Newark Star-Ledger stated: "MacArthur at heart is an apostle of the offensive, not the defensive. He does not believe in leaving the initiative to the foe, tactically or strategically."<sup>3</sup>

Several other newspapers cautioned the American people against over-optimism and the danger of falling once again into a complacent attitude now that MacArthur was at the helm. The New Haven Journal-Courier advised its readers not to expect immediate and spectacular results, and it reminded them that "the distances are too great and with MacArthur in Australia the lines from the American production lines are even longer."<sup>4</sup> It called MacArthur's transfer a needed tonic and saw in the transfer new policies and a more determined effort to resist the enemy.

The Oregon Statesman, on the other hand, still had doubts about the sincerity of the administration's motives and questioned if the nation's leaders, military and political, were fully committed to defeating the Japanese and driving the enemy back to his home waters.

<sup>1</sup>18 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>18 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>18 March 1942, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup>19 March 1942, p. 10.

Although the Statesman heaped high praise on MacArthur and called him the "Man of the Hour," the "United Nations' Hero," and the "Strategist,"<sup>1</sup> it did not consider him a miracle worker but rather a military genius who had the capacity to do the job provided he got the tools. And on this subject it pointed out that "we must see to it that the tools are supplied quickly."<sup>2</sup>

The New York Times said the reaction in Washington, when they heard the news, was one of sheer joy and jubilation as the senators and representatives enthusiastically hailed the change. Congress interpreted the President's decision as a plan to preserve MacArthur's talents for the future conduct of the war. The Times declared that "by sheer force of his personality, General MacArthur has knit together into a fighting team a heterogeneous collection of troops in the Philippines."<sup>3</sup>

In an attempt to bring the American public down to earth, the Detroit Free Press asked them not to forget the beleaguered forces on Bataan who were still experiencing the tortures of hell. "War can never be won merely by gigantic planning nor by an outlay of tremendous funds."<sup>4</sup> The Albuquerque Journal, in scoring this same fact, pointed out that neither could it be won by a forty-hour week. It had to be won by aggressive action, and the Journal reminded the American workers

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<sup>1</sup>19 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>18 March 1942, p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>19 March 1942, p. 3.

that "the men on Bataan are on the job twenty-four hours a day." Then it asked this question: "When are we going to make some sacrifices to back them up and hasten the day that help will reach them?"<sup>1</sup>

Not all editors approved of MacArthur's departure from the Philippines. In California, Robert Noble and Ellis Q. Jones were arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for slurs made against MacArthur in their publication, Friend of Progress:

The great Gibraltar-like General MacArthur who valiantly fired on the Bonus Army in Washington . . . . the great protector . . . . he just ran out in the dead of night and didn't tell nobody nothing. Even the British general down in Singapore had the guts to stay on the job and surrender in the interest of his troops when he saw the jig was up. General MacArthur's desertion of his troops in the field is probably the smallest and cheapest Dunkirk of a long series.<sup>2</sup>

While speaking to an audience on 25 March, Noble referred to MacArthur as a "phony" who looked too much like a general to be a general and then added: "I say to hell with MacArthur." His audience of 300 cheered.<sup>3</sup>

Even Tokyo tried to propagandize MacArthur's flight to Australia but without success. It interpreted his departure as an indication of the low morale among American-Filipino troops and as a damaging confession that the American-Filipino leaders "were not worth their rank and that MacArthur's choice to lead the floundering Allies was clear

<sup>1</sup>21 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Los Angeles Times, 1 April 1942, p. 1. Also the New York Times.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

evidence of the low morale of the Allied forces."<sup>1</sup> On 26 March, Tokyo ridiculed MacArthur's method of "Ballyhoo" and use of the press to get what he needed:

The general appears to have exhausted his fertile imagination after doing a marvelous job of building himself up as a Hollywoodian hero in the Bataan campaign.

Though MacArthur was able to conjure up colossal tales of heroism at Bataan, where there was no one around to check up on their validity, America's number one hero has apparently come to the realization that the situation in Australia demands something more than self ballyhoo.<sup>2</sup>

Once the question of commander was resolved by Washington, Wainwright assumed full command of the American-Filipino forces. The new commander was a 1906 graduate of West Point, a veteran of World War I, and, like most good military leaders, he was courageous and fearless. His staff work in the First World War won for him the Distinguished Service Cross. Because of his tall and lean figure he was known as "Skinny."

Most newspapers were of the opinion that Wainwright was more than qualified to be MacArthur's successor and lead the American-Filipino forces. However, the Washington Post had some reservations and believed that he "lacked the canny knowledge of Filipino psychology."<sup>3</sup>

In paying tribute to both men the Nevada State Journal anticipated no change in tactics because of the change of commanders. Neither

<sup>1</sup>Manila Tribune, 20 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Manila Tribune, 26 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>3 April 1942, p. 11.

did it underestimate Wainwright's role: "If he can get the breaks, he can come out of Bataan a hero. The eyes of the world are upon him as upon MacArthur."<sup>1</sup> After MacArthur's departure from Corregidor there was a lack of day-to-day news on the Philippines. Most newspaper men who had been on Corregidor or Bataan followed their hero to Australia, where he once again became the center of attention in his new role as United Nations Commander of the Southwest Pacific Area.

Wainwright, with a deteriorating military situation and with a force of sick and hungry men, remained to close out the final and unhappy episode of the American defense of the Philippines.

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<sup>1</sup>18 March 1942, p. 4.

## CHAPTER VI

### BEYOND HUMAN ENDURANCE

The full depth of MacArthur's defense of the Philippines can not be fully evaluated or truly understood, nor can Wainwright's position be fully appreciated without a discussion of Bataan's logistic difficulties. Unfortunately for America's cause in the Philippines, the military logisticians, strategists, and experts in Washington lacked the ingenuity and flexibility of mind to solve the difficulties inherent in long lines of communication (Map 1).

The men on Bataan were starving and they knew it. The inadequate and improper diet since the middle of January was taking its toll in sickness and in the lost hope for relief. The loss from sickness proved more damaging to American-Filipino strength and morale than the casualties sustained in actual combat since 8 December 1941.

Yet some would not give up hope. The Filipinos viewed MacArthur as the greatest leader living and saw in his trip to Australia a ray of hope and a guarantee that help would soon arrive. This belief was reinforced by the General's first public statement from Australia that "the relief of the Philippines was his primary purpose and that he had received orders from the President to take the offensive."<sup>1</sup> Still

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<sup>1</sup>Beloit Daily News, 27 March 1942, p. 1.

some thought that he had deserted them. This feeling was expressed in several forms, the most favorite being poetry.

One of the Navy's most slurring terms "Dugout Doug," was made into a poem and became a favorite on Bataan. It was sung to the tune of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Dugout Doug's not timid, he's just cautious, not afraid,  
He's protecting carefully the stars that Franklin made.  
Four star generals are as rare as good food on Bataan.  
And his troops go starving on.

Dugout Doug is ready in his Chris-Craft for the flee  
Over bounding billows and the wildly raging sea.  
For the Japs are pounding on the gates of Bataan.  
And his troops go starving on.<sup>1</sup>

It was a "catchy" tune and provided some moments of relaxation. However, MacArthur's personal record in the face of danger and his readiness to shed his own blood for his country made it no more than a "catchy" tune. The St. Louis Post Dispatch interpreted the term as "sour grapes" and saw it as an effort on the part of naval personnel to retaliate for MacArthur's bitterness and pointed accusations against the Navy and the admirals in general for running out on him.<sup>2</sup>

By the end of March all but the hard core optimists on Bataan had lost all faith in the possibility of timely relief. By then, food and the hope of survival from one day to the next became the most important facts of life. On this score, the Los Angeles Times caustically remarked:

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<sup>1</sup>Toland, But Not in Shame, p. 305.

<sup>2</sup>26 January 1942, p. 9A.

It was difficult for the men to understand why aid did not come. They felt that help could have been sent and that American forces could have fought their way to Bataan. Whatever the reasons, the looked-for, prayed-for help did not come.<sup>1</sup>

The New York Times reported that the defenders became so sensitive to any sign of relief that when several vessels were shifted from the south side of Corregidor to the north side to escape shell fire, the observers on Bataan immediately spread the rumor that a relief convoy had arrived. When the truth was revealed, many still refused to believe it. The paper added that "although three airfields had been built on Bataan for expected planes, none came."<sup>2</sup>

As the days passed and no relief ships arrived, the truth became self-evident. The men on Bataan continued to scan the seas and fight, and as they scanned and fought they also composed more poetry and proclaimed it loudly:

We're the battling bastards of Bataan:  
 No momma, no poppa, no Uncle Sam,  
 No aunts, no uncles, no nephews, no nieces,  
 No rifles, no guns or artillery pieces,  
 And nobody gives a damn.<sup>3</sup>

A soldier-poet expressed the mood of the men when he wrote:

. . . MacArthur's promise in every mind.  
 The time is secret but I can say  
 That swift relief ships are on the way  
 Thousands of men and hundreds of planes  
 Back in Manila before the rains!  
 With decorations and honors too.

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<sup>1</sup>22 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>12 April 1942, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup>Toland, But Not in Shame, p. 292.

MacArthur said it, it must be true.<sup>1</sup>

A poignant example of the apprehension and the force and effect of rumors on the Bataan defenders was expressed by one of the American defenders there.

. . . The main and most precious source of misinformation is of course rumors. The trouble is that people want so badly to believe them, and no matter how hard we try rumors just will crop up and spread . . . .

And then he added: "I guess we're all suspicious of most news now, just because of the effect that rumors have had."<sup>2</sup> In a later letter dated 31 October 1944, smuggled out of a Manila war prison, the writer had this to add to his former statements about rumors.

It's a little short of amazing how reports can become garbled and information misquoted even when its available. And we are, all of us through sad experience, tempted to believe the worse news, because it seems that is the kind that most often turns out.<sup>3</sup>

In the over-all logistical situation, the food problem on Bataan was considered by far to have been the worse spectacle of the whole Philippine epic. It was far from ideal. MacArthur's decision to fight the invader on the beaches diverted supplies that normally would have been sent to Bataan on the outbreak of war. Unfortunately, a large amount of these supplies never reached Bataan even though a frenzied last minute attempt was made to stock Bataan and Corregidor.

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<sup>1</sup>The quotation is from a poem entitled "Abucay Withdrawal" by Henry G. Lee. Quoted by Morton, Philippines, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup>Baehr's Letters, 10 February 1942.

<sup>3</sup>Baehr's Letters, 31 October 1944.

The confusion surrounding the evacuation of rations and supplies to Bataan can be attributed, first and foremost, to timing. MacArthur's refusal to drop his own plan and revert to WPO-3 until 23 December made last minute preparation and orderly evacuation of all necessary supplies to Bataan virtually impossible. The second major reason why more rations were not transported to Bataan was because of the speed of the withdrawal which compelled many unit commanders to disregard orders from USAFFE. Unit commanders on their way to Bataan were instructed to pick up extra rations and supplies and deliver them to the receiving depots on Bataan.

The failure of many unit commanders, more concerned about the safety of their own units, to follow these simple instructions contributed in a large measure to the serious food shortage which followed. Units that did pick up extra rations made no effort to turn them in. The third main reason for the food shortage on Bataan was because of an inadequate transportation system and the misuse of available transportation.<sup>1</sup>

When word reached MacArthur's headquarters that no extra rations had been received by the depots, an immediate investigation was started. The investigation brought to light some minor infractions of the ration regulations and some serious abuses in the requisitioning of rations.

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<sup>1</sup>See in particular Theodoro A. Agoncillo, The Fateful Years, Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941-45, 2 vols. (Quezon City: P. I., R. P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1965), I, 128-29.

An important factor in the heavy demands on the limited food supply was the large influx of refugees into Bataan during the withdrawal from the beaches. The status of these refugees was questionable, yet there is no record of positive action being taken to clear them and all other nonessential Filipino civilians from Bataan.

By the middle of January, fresh provisions almost disappeared and bananas and fruits were no longer on the menu. In early February the rice stock ran low. Rice is the basic food for the Filipinos and when bread was substituted, it often proved unpalatable to them. In addition, when the bread was received by the frontline troops it was often "as hard as rocks."<sup>1</sup> The situation was somewhat improved when several small supply ships with loads of rice, beef, and sugar successfully ran the Japanese blockade. When the flour supply was exhausted in late March, rice was substituted and servings were limited. As food became scarcer, the troops were fed only two meals a day. Several ships succeeded in landing supplies on the southern islands,<sup>2</sup> but of the 10,500 tons unloaded only 1,100 tons reached Bataan or Corregidor.

The Honolulu Star Bulletin reported that herds of cattle were driven into Bataan prior to the arrival of the troops and "this saved the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal Interview, Roberto Martires, 11 August 1967.

<sup>2</sup>These were the Coast Farmer, which arrived in Mindanao on 19 February 1942, and the Dona Nati and Anhui which arrived at Cebu in mid-March. See Morton, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years, p. 191.

troops for a while from the acute shortage of meat."<sup>1</sup> The Nevada State Journal remarked that Lieutenant Colonel Warren Clear, who had been on Corregidor, observed that "as early as 5 February, the men were reduced to eating rice and mule meat and their own pack animals."<sup>2</sup> The Miami Herald expanded on this point when it commented that the "troops occasionally bagged wild pigs and carabao, but these were few and far between,"<sup>3</sup> and even monkeys and iguanas became scarce. Even Wainwright's favorite horse and prize jumper, Joseph Conrad, was sacrificed to feed the hungry men.<sup>4</sup>

On 3 April the Louisville Banner reported that the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, had stated at a press conference that "for every ship that arrived in the Philippines, we lost nearly two ships." Two of the administration's greatest critics, the Herald American and the Chicago Tribune, did not let the opportunity go by without taking a full broadside at Mr. Stimson and the administration.

Two days before Mr. Stimson's statement, the Chicago Herald American had commented that the mistrust of the American public in its leaders was rising to such proportions that Congress was in a "sweat" about the amount of mail it was getting from discontented voters over the progress and direction of the war. It then said this

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<sup>1</sup>17 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>13 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>13 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Toland, But Not in Shame, p. 291.

about the situation:

One of the heaviest floods of protest from the people in congressional history is pouring into Washington. The information from some Congressmen reveals that "they are nearly breaking up" under the strain of this vast deluge of letters and telegrams.<sup>1</sup>

On the following day, the Herald blasted the administration again: "It is an astounding thing that everyone seems to be able to get out of the Philippines, but nobody seems able to get in. Everyone from the highest to the lowest implore that aid be sent to them swiftly."<sup>2</sup> Several days later it shafted the President by asking: Is the President for the first time since his first inaugural in 1933 out of touch with public sentiment? Has he failed to read the signs right? In answering these questions, it caustically stated:

Some members of his party who think so, have stated that Mr. Roosevelt--the master politician--has no conception, as yet of the depth of the feelings which are agitating the people over the conduct of the war. The revolt against the President and his war policies is said to be more pronounced in the south than in any other section of the country, and Congress indicates it is true.<sup>3</sup>

The Chicago Tribune, never convinced that the administration was doing its utmost to aid MacArthur, zeroed in on Mr. Stimson and held him responsible for the failure to get ships through to the Philippines. "Furthermore," commented the Tribune, "Mr. Stimson did not say whether three or thirty ships made the attempt."<sup>4</sup> Undoubtedly, it was thinking of the eighty percent loss suffered by the Allies' convoys

<sup>1</sup>1 April 1942, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>2 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>4 April 1942, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>11 April 1942, p. 1.

sailing war material to Russia's northern ports.<sup>1</sup> These ships, often in greater danger than many sailing the Pacific, were constant prey for the German "U" boats roaming the Atlantic and for the German land-based planes which often harassed them clear into their port of call. Furthermore, continued the Chicago Tribune, Patrick Hurley, our minister to New Zealand, who was sent out to the war zone to help expedite supplies to Bataan, "did not arrive in Wellington until 12 March 1942, more than three months after war began."<sup>2</sup>

The Concord Daily Monitor made the startling disclosure that when Mr. Hurley arrived in the Pacific, "he was well heeled with Ft. Knox gold."<sup>3</sup> The official explanation for this unusual procedure was that the captains, the crews, and the ship owners who were willing to make an effort at breaching the Japanese blockade would not accept anything but gold; even American dollars were not good enough. It was a dangerous mission. Each ship would have to go in on an individual basis because "there were no convoys to run in vital loads of foods and drugs for the now cornered American-Filipino forces."<sup>4</sup>

The lack of food was not the only commodity which plagued the men on Bataan. Cigarettes were perpetually in short supply and seriously affected the morale of the troops. According to Frank

<sup>1</sup>Whitney, MacArthur, His Rendezvous with History, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>11 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>7 May 1942, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Allison Ind, Allied Intelligence Bureau, (New York: Van Rensselaer Press, 1959), p. 116.

Hewlett, Miami Herald correspondent, the extreme shortage of cigarettes along the firing line had raised the black market price to five pesos<sup>1</sup> per pack in contrast to the low price of ten centavos in the rear area. On the firing line even a cigarette puff was a luxury at ten centavos a puff.<sup>2</sup>

Another serious problem, and one never fully resolved, was the critical shortage of clothing and equipment. The Philippine Army, never adequately equipped, had reached Bataan in an exhausted and unshod condition. It lacked even the minimum essentials to withstand the jungle fighting and the extremes in temperature of hot days and cold nights. Replacement clothing was obtained by stripping the dead. Even the dying were often denuded as they gasped their last breath.<sup>3</sup>

To the problem of climate, health, and malnutrition was added the dread disease of malaria. Bataan was considered one of the world's worst malaria infested areas. Its natives lived under the most primitive sanitary conditions and often fell prey to the ravages of malaria. The native villages were breeding grounds for the mosquito. Commanders adopted a limited control program which failed because of conditions in the villages and because of the attitudes which the native troops carried over into military life. The call of nature was answered

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<sup>1</sup>Miami Herald, 18 April 1942, p. 2. One peso is equivalent to fifty cents in U. S. currency; one centavo is equal to one half cent.

<sup>2</sup>Personal interview, Roberto Martires, 11 August 1967.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

wherever it was most convenient.<sup>1</sup>

As long as there was an adequate supply of quinine and each man took his prescribed dosage of 5 grams, malaria could be controlled. But the supply was never adequate to meet demands.<sup>2</sup> The lack of quinine and the unsanitary practices followed by the troops added to the frightful toll of malaria victims. The stream of casualties of all types grew so rapidly that it clogged the field and base hospitals and brought about a complete collapse of medical evacuation procedure. Forward medical stations broke down completely and the conditions at the two general hospitals were no more favorable.

Nat Floyd, war correspondent for the New York Times who had spent 106 days on Bataan, reported that in the last days of the Bataan campaign as many as eighty per cent of the troops were suffering from malaria, thirty per cent had bacillary dysentery, ten per cent suffered with amoebic dysentery, and many more had hookworms. By then, Wainwright and his commanders estimated that combat efficiency had been reduced to about twenty per cent of normal.<sup>3</sup>

Concerned about the seriousness of the situation on Bataan, Wainwright on 26 March sent a radio message to Marshall in Washington, stating that the food situation on Bataan had reached desperate straits and that food on hand would only last until 15 April. The troops, he warned Washington, were at one third rations, poorly balanced and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, pp. 378-79.

<sup>3</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 384.

very deficient in vitamins, and "if the supplies did not arrive by 15 April, the troops there will be starved into submission."<sup>1</sup>

Although the Philippines were part of MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Command, Wainwright had authority to deal directly with Washington. When MacArthur read a copy of the message, he sent one of his own. "It is of course possible," he stated, "that with my departure the vigor of application of conservation may have been relaxed."<sup>2</sup> Major Baehr, as he thought about his last full meal, stated: "It must be grand to be a well fed soldier on the winning side of a war. We 'Battling Bastards of Bataan' have never had that view--its been short rations and tighten your belt all along."<sup>3</sup>

On 23 March, the St. Louis Post Dispatch reported that the Japanese had intensified their propaganda appeals to Wainwright's troops. They urged the defenders to surrender and they presented General Wainwright with an ultimatum which demanded his surrender by 22 March or else he would have to face the consequences. All propaganda appeals were ignored. In reporting the latest Japanese propaganda effort to MacArthur Wainwright informed him that "he would keep fighting."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Toland, But Not in Shame, p. 305.

<sup>2</sup>Willoughby and Prange, Campaigns of MacArthur, for MacArthur's "Order of Battle" before leaving the Philippines, I, 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup>Baehr's Letters, 12 October 1944.

<sup>4</sup>23 March 1942, p. 24.

The Japanese plan for the final and decisive showdown called for sustained attacks against Bataan and Corregidor alternately until 28 March when the main attack would be switched back to Bataan. After this date Corregidor would be harassed by periodic bombing on a twenty-four hour basis. The New York Times reported an "increased number of troop movements and patrol clashes on Bataan," and two days of sustained bombing attacks "from early morning until midnight" against Corregidor on 26 and 27 March.<sup>1</sup>

As the intensity of air and military attacks increased, Bataan became a virtual hell. Facing no opposition and showing contempt for the anti-aircraft guns on Bataan, the Japanese pilots waited until the last minute to drop their bombs. Forced to keep under cover or close to their foxholes, the effectiveness of the defenders and their will to fight were materially reduced.

On 2 April, General Yamashita publicly announced the start of a large scale effort which would end in victory. Yamashita "was determined to wear the defenders down by sheer weight of numbers and machines."<sup>2</sup> Oddly enough, the day chosen to start the main offensive was an important day for each side. For the Christians it was a religious holiday--Good Friday, and for the Japanese it was a national holiday in honor of Japan's first ruler, the legendary Emperor Jimmu Tenno.

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<sup>1</sup>28 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Miami Herald, 7 April 1942, p. 10.

On 6 April, a concerted effort by the defenders to regain their lost positions failed. The drive was ground under the heels of a massive push developed by the Japanese 4th Division and 65th Brigade which steam-rolled through the abortive push. It was a decisive victory for the Japanese. "The remorseless grinding power of the Japanese hordes," said the Philadelphia Inquirer, "is beginning to win more ground than the battle-weary American-Filipino soldiers and the smoke-stained United States Marines and sailors are able to retake."<sup>1</sup>

In a subsequent edition it had this to say: "The whole picture is one of maximum effort on the part of every element of Wainwright's command--maximum effort against overwhelming opposition which has now developed irresistible momentum."<sup>2</sup> The Dallas Morning News, in commenting on Bataan and Corregidor, stated: "They should be held at all costs in any way possible for it constitutes the only island of resistance in a sea of Japanese domination."<sup>3</sup> In describing the drama of the events, the Chicago Daily News commented: "Clawing their way further into the stubbornly defended positions of the defenders, they forced them slowly but unquestionably back."<sup>4</sup> The Nashville Banner reported that the seriousness of the situation and the heavy fighting which approached "toe-to-toe intensity was radioed to Washington and MacArthur's headquarters in Australia."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>7 April 1942, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup>9 April 1942, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup>8 April 1942, Part II, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>8 April 1942, pp. 1.

<sup>5</sup>8 April 1942, p. 1.

The Japanese forces maintained pressure all the way down to the toe of Bataan. In Manila Bay, their artillery bearing barges, although inaccurate, were causing harassment and destruction to the defenders and their beach defenses. To compound the seriousness of the situation, the Japanese had installed some heavy artillery in strategic positions on Wainwright's right flank. The destruction caused by these big guns, which were able to sweep the whole field of battle with concentrated fire, was both extensive and demoralizing to the defenders and to their positions.

The constant bombing and artillery shelling forced the defenders to stay in their foxholes and left them in a bewildered and demoralized state. The ravages of hunger and disease had so deteriorated the fighting quality of the defenders that under the strain of the bombing and artillery barrages some of them began to crack, making them impervious to the orders of their superiors.

In pondering why Yamashita was in such a hurry to win the Philippines and be willing to pay a disproportionate high price in men and equipment, the Los Angeles Times concluded that it was due to several reasons: First, Japan's urgent need to consolidate gains and release troops for other military objectives; second, the unconquered islands of the Philippines represented a face-losing reproach to Japanese strategy and power; third, the danger of Corregidor in American hands which denied them the use of Manila Bay; and, finally, the

possibility of a relief force reaching Wainwright.<sup>1</sup>

In editorializing on the desperate situation in the Philippines the Providence Journal stated:

. . . It might be thought that this situation leaves General Wainwright no choice but to surrender. It is supposed to be folly to resist the inevitable. Surrender is not dishonorable in such circumstances. Indeed surrender to avoid a sacrifice of life would seem to add the virtues of common sense and humanitarian impulses to those of bravery and fighting skill already magnificently displayed.<sup>2</sup>

The Journal interpreted the savagery of the Japanese latest attacks as an effort to compensate for the inferiority complex acquired from previous Bataan setbacks.

By the morning of 8 April, the smell of death was everywhere. Somber shadows had begun to enshroud the drama of Bataan. The remorseless grinding power of the Japanese forced the defenders to take whatever defensive positions or cover that were available. It resulted in the first breakdown of organization and command within the defenders' ranks.

The situation on Bataan became one of complete confusion as the Japanese drive developed irresistible momentum. Shifting their attacks alternately from the bay forts to Bataan and then back again to the bay forts, the Japanese heavy bombers blasted the communication lines between the two in an effort to shut off the supplies flowing from Corregidor. In an effort to stem the tide Wainwright called for a counterattack on the evening of 8 April. Commented the Idaho Daily

<sup>1</sup> 9 April 1942, Part II, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> 9 April 1942, p. 13.

Statesman: "It never had a chance. Its failure was due to the physical and mental exhaustion of the troops who did not have the strength to leave their foxholes."<sup>1</sup> It was an indication, said the Statesman, that effective military resistance on Bataan had just about ceased to exist.

At this point, General Edward P. King, the Bataan commander, finding the situation hopeless and to avoid further loss of life, decided on his own volition to surrender his forces. Neither he nor his staff saw any way to stop the Japanese from taking the high ground north of Mariveles by the evening of the next day--9 April.<sup>2</sup> After a final meeting with his officers, during which instructions were issued for the demolition of all military stores except vehicles, King sent a terminal message to Wainwright:

. . . I have decided to surrender Bataan . . . . This decision is solely my own. Neither my staff nor my command has helped me. If I do not surrender, Bataan will be known as the greatest slaughter in history.<sup>3</sup>

Millions of dollars of explosives were destroyed. The resulting explosions caused violent tremors in the demolition areas and gave the spectators on Bataan and Corregidor an unrivaled display of fireworks. It was all the Fourth of July celebrations rolled into one. The extravaganza was described by the correspondent of the Chicago Tribune who witnessed the scene from Corregidor "as a scene of tremendous explosions and of myriad of colored fires as munition dumps

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<sup>1</sup>10 April 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Morton, Philippines, p. 457.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 457.

exploded and men carried out the last defiant orders of the scorched earth policy."<sup>1</sup>

Shell fragments were falling so fast and in such profusion that the defenders were forced to seek shelter in their trenches and fox-holes. Even as the defenders carried out the last defiant orders, Nature, not to be outdone, added her own touch to Bataan's final hours. In the late evening of 8 April, a severe earthquake shook the peninsula.<sup>2</sup>

The story of King's surrender is one of confusion and misunderstanding between the Japanese and the Americans.<sup>3</sup> His efforts to gain consideration for his men proved futile. A formal surrender treaty was never signed and the Japanese refused to accept the surrender as one of an integral fighting force. The results were disastrous.

The surrender of Bataan proved an anticlimax to the tragic consequences that soon followed. The story of Bataan ended on a note of horror and atrocities as the defenders were compelled to undergo a sixty-five mile "Death March" from Mariveles to San Fernando. Deprived of adequate food and water and the vehicles that King had saved from destruction, the troops were forced to march under a hot sun. Stragglers were clubbed, beaten, and bayoneted by their guards. It was under such degrading conditions that King and his vanquished

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<sup>1</sup>11 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Toland, But Not in Shame, p. 329.

<sup>3</sup>Nakayama, Negotiations with King, 26 August 49. ATIS Document 50246. Quoted in Morton, Philippines, p. 465.

warriors made their way into captivity.<sup>1</sup>

Although these conditions were the norm rather than the exception, many other prisoners received fair and humane treatment. There has developed a controversy as to whether the inhumane treatment extended to the vanquished was carried out with or without official sanction. The main point of the controversy centers on the "Order To Kill Captives."<sup>2</sup> This order is purported to be an official announcement condoning death for the prisoners.

The order is strongly disputed by Stanley Falk, author of Bataan: The March of Death.<sup>3</sup> But Brigadier General Clifford Blue-mel, presently retired and former Commanding General, 31st Division (PA), who has lived through the "Death March" confirms its validity.<sup>4</sup> The document was never introduced in evidence at General Homma's trial in 1946 and this fact may tend to reduce its validity and legality. However, there appears to be no question, as substantiated by the events surrounding the surrender, the march itself, and from witnessed accounts, that the spirit of the order, whether directed from higher headquarters or not, was carried out by a large number of the Japanese captors and in some cases with sadistic delight.

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<sup>1</sup>Stanley L. Falk brings this out with great clarity in his book, Bataan: The March of Death, (New York: Norton, 1962).

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix C.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix D.

When MacArthur was informed of the brutal details, he authorized the release of the story to the press so that the public could be informed. Strangely enough, it never made the front pages of the press. The story had been "killed" by orders from Washington which prohibited the release of prisoner-of-war atrocities to the press. MacArthur, who was very critical of this new policy, dubbed it "Managed News," explaining:

The administration, committed to a Europe-First effort, feared American public opinion would demand a greater reaction against Japan, but whatever the cause, here was the sinister beginning of the managed news concept of those in power.<sup>1</sup>

In a week of reporting the last stand of the Bataan defenders, the press, in banner headlines, informed a disbelieving American public of Bataan's eventual fall and tragic end. The news brought frustration, shock, grief, and a great deal of soul searching.

Of all the eulogies and tributes spoken, none seem to voice the thoughts and feelings of most Americans better than the one expressed by MacArthur. In his tribute to the defenders of Bataan, he stated:

The Bataan forces went out as it would have wished, fighting to the end of its flickering, forlorn hope. No army has done so much with so little, and nothing became it more than its last hours of trial and agony. To the weeping mothers of the dead, I can only say that the sacrifices and halo of Jesus of Nazareth has descended upon their sons, and that God will take them

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Tribune, 15 September 1964, Sec. I, p. 8.

unto himself.<sup>1</sup>

In such words did MacArthur reveal the depth of his own feelings and at the same time his failure to come to the aid of his fallen comrades. It also revealed a compassion for the grieving, weeping mothers and wives of the fallen heroes.

The tragic fact, as revealed by the numerous headlines and editorials, was that the American nation was not ready to discipline itself to make a sacrifice comparable to that of the enemy.

The American public was sarcastically reminded by the Nashville Banner that "no bombs fall here," and while the situation was becoming critical in the Philippines, "some were striking, picketing and delaying production." And furthermore, continued the Banner, "while social gains were being debated in Congress and on soap boxes in public parks, millions were counting and spending the booty--the bounty and bonus of overtime."<sup>2</sup>

A second shaft came from the Philadelphia Inquirer: "What is the matter with us? Where is our spirit? When are we going to wake up to the fact that America is engaged in a life and death struggle and that she has not begun to fight?"<sup>3</sup> The Burlington Free Press viewed "life as a gleam of time between two eternities." The important thing about life, the Free Press continued, "is not how long it lasts but the

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<sup>1</sup>His comments were carried in practically all newspapers. For example, see Washington Post, 11 April 1942, p. 1, among many.

<sup>2</sup>9 April 1942, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>11 April 1942, p. 1.

spirit in which it is lived, and the men of Bataan have, in life, given their utmost in their country's service."<sup>1</sup>

The Louisville Times called it the shame of 130,000,000 people, and stated: It is the shame of a nation which gave responsibilities to a possession without underwriting its assumption with military force."<sup>2</sup> Tragic as the news of Bataan's fall was to the nation, it was particularly heartbreaking to New Mexico which had provided almost 2,000 of her native sons to the defending forces.

The New York Times knew of no reversal in American history "so great as this one."<sup>3</sup> Of the 53,400 prisoners taken, 5,553 were Americans. Although the fall of Bataan was considered by the Los Angeles Times as a considerable reversal for the Allied cause, it was no reason for discouragement. "It is only page one," stated the Times. "The chapter that will tell the story of the Philippines is unfinished."<sup>4</sup> The Pittsburg Courier pointed out that the major part of the forces on Bataan consisted of Filipinos and "that less than 10,000 of the almost 37,000 troops on Bataan were Americans."<sup>5</sup>

The Miami Herald, in paying tribute to the gallantry and heroism of the American soldiers and to MacArthur's spectacular defense in the Philippines, observed:

<sup>1</sup>11 April 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>10 April 1942, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>10 April 1942, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>10 April 1942, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>28 April 1942, p. 13; 3,500 Americans escaped to Corregidor.

Praise and honor is also due others who kept up the necessary part of the defense. There were sixteen generals in addition to Wainwright on Bataan and Corregidor, many ~~unknown~~ to most Americans but genuine heroes just the same.<sup>1</sup>

One of the administration's severest critics, Colonel Robert McCormick of the Chicago Tribune, maintained that the loss there was an unbelievable commentary on the "lack of foresight of bureaucracy," and that it was sacrificed to the "myopia of bureaucracy."<sup>2</sup> The Pittsburg Courier, one of the administration's strongest supporters, said the statement was a distortion of facts and in commenting on both the McCormick and Hearst publications, implied that both were obstructionists and that personal dislike, particularly by Mr. Randolph Hearst, of Mr. Roosevelt was such that not "even a war of national survival" could resolve it.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>17 April 1942, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>11 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>18 April 1942, p. 13.

## CHAPTER VII

### SURRENDER OF THE PHILIPPINES

The withdrawal to the beaches and the evacuation of personnel to the relative safety of Corregidor was one of confusion, disorganization, and harrowing experiences. Although the end was inevitable, the unbelievable swiftness of the Japanese and the suddenness of King's surrender made orderly withdrawal an impossibility.

All through the seemingly endless night, the retreating defenders trudged their weary way to the rendezvous point. Many defenders never made it and were cut off from their haven by the pursuing Japanese who were determined to prevent the defeated troops of Bataan from reaching the bay forts. Those who were captured merely exchanged the hardships of the battlefield for those of a Japanese prison camp, an experience all found degrading.<sup>1</sup> The lucky ones made it to Corregidor or to the other bay forts, but there they found only temporary sanctuary. Only the dead found peace.

Of the newspaper accounts depicting the night's happenings,

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<sup>1</sup>Baehr's Letters, 31 October 1944. In this letter Major Baehr, after two and one half years as a prisoner of war, remarked: "If there is anything lower or more useless than a prisoner of war of the Japanese, I don't know what it would be."

the most gripping was that from the pen of Dean Schedler of the Chicago Tribune:

All night long they came to escape stricken Bataan for the comparative safety of Corregidor. All who dared made the trip to the fortress as they fled the hell fires of Bataan.

They came across in row boats. Some swam, braving the shark infested waters, and were picked up in mid-channel. All the while Japanese bombers dropped their bombs or viciously machine-gunned the channels.<sup>1</sup>

Although King's surrender ended all organized resistance on Bataan, the Japanese were still denied their objective--Manila Bay, the Pearl of the Orient. However, with Bataan in Japanese hands, Corregidor now became vulnerable to both air assaults and to the merciless artillery shelling from the Japanese guns which were strategically located on the high grounds in southern Bataan. The damage caused by the aerial bombing was small in comparison to the extensive damage caused by the accuracy of the big artillery pieces.

Corregidor, the location of Ft. Mills and Wainwright's headquarters, was the most important of the four bay forts.<sup>2</sup> It had been considered an indestructible and impregnable barrier; however, with the arrival of the airplane it became vulnerable from the air. It is a small island about three and one-half miles long by one and one-half miles at its widest point. Its landing field could accommodate only small planes. Its proximity to Bataan--about two miles from its

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<sup>1</sup>10 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>The other three were Ft. Drum, Ft. Hughes, and Ft. Frank.

southern tip--and its strategic location in the bay made it the key to the American-Filipino defense on Bataan. The New York Times remarked that "the natives called it the "home of the big guns."<sup>1</sup>

In comparing Corregidor to Malta, the Providence Journal observed:

Corregidor, although physically like Malta, lacks the concentration of anti-aircraft guns and fighter plane protection. Malta, unlike Corregidor, is regularly supplied by English convoys.<sup>2</sup>

The Minneapolis Star Journal scored this same point when it stated:

"Airplanes, land-based nearby, have been battering the Island of Malta since 1939 and it has not fallen yet. It is still far too early to give up the Philippines as wholly lost."<sup>3</sup>

In the first two weeks of January, Corregidor was bombed extensively from the air by high-flying Japanese planes. However, its odd shape and its scanty area of five square miles made a very small target and Japanese pilots and bombardiers dropped most of their bombs in the bay. From the middle of January to about the middle of March activity was materially reduced. However, the reduction in aerial bombing was offset by an increase in the number of artillery bombardments against the bay forts. The reason given for the aerial lull during February by the Manila Tribune was the Japanese "need of planes and personnel to facilitate the prosecution of the Pacific conflict on

<sup>1</sup>29 March 1942, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>10 April 1942, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>15 January 1942, p. 12.

other fronts."<sup>1</sup>

On 13 March, the Miami Herald reported that Corregidor suffered the "world's worst bombing." Several days later the Japanese zeroed in their larger and more powerful guns on Corregidor and began to bombard the island on an all-day basis. Then in the last week of March the Japanese introduced a new bomber and a new shuttle system which subjected Corregidor to continual high-level bombings from noon until midnight. The damage from these hit and run raids proved negligible and caused little damage to Corregidor. During the first week of April, the Japanese concentrated their maximum efforts on the destruction of the forces on Bataan, and lessened their aerial attacks against Corregidor.

The Japanese, flushed with their success in Bataan, were anxious to begin the seige of Corregidor and to force its defenders to their knees. On 10 April the New York Herald Tribune reported that many officers in MacArthur's headquarters were surprised at Japan's sudden success on Bataan for they had not read in Wainwright's reports a "worsening of the defenders' position." On 13 April, MacArthur pointed out in a message to Marshall the importance of Bataan's fall to Corregidor:

The life of this fortress is definitely limited and its destruction certain unless sea communication can be restored. If this cannot be accomplished, you must be prepared for the

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<sup>1</sup> 11 April 1942, p. 8.

fall of the harbor defenses.<sup>1</sup>

Corregidor's defenders, with feelings of apprehension and sensing that their days were numbered, fought back with everything at their disposal. Corregidor's big guns threw back round for round and continued to inflict heavy damage and casualties on the Japanese. Wainwright sent a message to his troops in which he ruled out all questions of a surrender. He vowed that the bay forts would be defended to the end.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer commented that "in holding out hope to his men," Wainwright emphasized, "Corregidor can and will be held."<sup>2</sup> The worst destruction and the greatest fear in the hearts of the defenders were caused by the merciless and plunging fire of the big 240 mm Japanese guns<sup>3</sup> that were looking straight down on their target from the high ground on Bataan.

The Nevada State Journal saw no difference between living on Corregidor or living on an artillery bull's-eye. The paper then added that Lieutenant Colonel Warren Clear, an eyewitness to the attacks on Corregidor, remarked that "Corregidor would be the target of everything the Japanese can throw at them. These men have resisted far above and beyond the call of duty."<sup>4</sup> Another newspaper described

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<sup>1</sup>Radio MacArthur to Marshall, No. 228, 13 Apr 42, AG 384.3 GHQ SWPA.; Morton, Philippines, p. 521.

<sup>2</sup>15 April 1942, p. 8. <sup>3</sup>Equal to approximately 9 1/2 inches.

<sup>4</sup>13 April 1942, p. 1.

Corregidor as being the "seething crater of an active volcano and like the crater of a volcano, Corregidor today is seething under loads and loads of bombs and shells being dumped on it by Japanese bombers and guns."<sup>1</sup>

When the seige of Corregidor began, the American-Filipino personnel on the island, unlike the emaciated troops on Bataan, were in no danger of starvation. In reporting on the adequacy of food and the morale of the troops, the New York Times stated: "The morale of the troops in Manila Bay is high and the limited stocks of food are rigidly rationed, but all get enough to eat. The food is simple but good, monotonous but nourishing."<sup>2</sup>

By the first week of May the situation on Corregidor was critical. Each succeeding day brought conditions closer and closer to the point of no return. The nation's press which had relegated the Philippine epic, since the fall of Bataan, to the back pages, was once more headlining the unfolding drama in Manila Bay on the front pages.

About midnight of 5 May, after a day of intensive bombing and shelling, the Japanese began their final assault on Corregidor. The attack proved so damaging that the beach defenses, unable to withstand the cascading destruction, simply crumbled and fell to the ground. When the troop-crammed barges of the enemy touched Corregidor there was little to impede their movements. The New York Times reported that even as the assault was in progress, Wainwright informed

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<sup>1</sup>Manila Tribune, 17 April 1942, p. 3. <sup>2</sup>23 April 1942, p. 4.

Washington "that a landing attack was in progress."<sup>1</sup> In a subsequent edition the Times estimated that it took the Japanese forces thirty-three hours to complete the invasion and capture all bay forts.<sup>2</sup>

On 6 May, a message from President Roosevelt to Wainwright, while praising the gallant commander and his heroic troops, had the overtones of a farewell:

. . . I have been following your heroic stand . . . . In spite of all the handicaps, lack of food and ammunition you have given a shining example of tenacity, resourcefulness, and steadfast courage . . . . Every soldier, sailor, and marine are inspired by the gallant struggles of their comrades in the Philippines. You and your devoted followers have become living symbols of our war aims and the guarantee of victory.<sup>3</sup>

Wainwright later wrote that during the intensive bombing and bombardment he was so amazed at the number of bombs and shells that fell on Corregidor, "he did not believe the tempo could be further increased."<sup>4</sup> To his surprise, in one twenty-four hour period approximately 16,000 shells of all calibers fell on Corregidor,<sup>5</sup> about eleven shells a minute. To prevent further bloodshed and unnecessary loss of life, Wainwright decided to surrender Corregidor. After surrender

<sup>1</sup>16 May 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>28 May 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>This message received widespread publicity in all the papers of that date. It is also quoted in full in Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, p. 118.

<sup>4</sup>Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, pp. 110-12.

<sup>5</sup>Harbor Defense Report of Operation, p. 69; Morton, Philippines, p. 547.

arrangements had been made, he informed Washington of his actions.

In his anguish he stated:

With broken heart and head bowed in sadness but not in shame, I must arrange terms for the surrender of the fortified islands of Manila Bay. My troops and I have accomplished all that is humanly possible, and we have upheld the best traditions of the United States and its Army. With profound regret and with continued pride in my gallant troops, I go to meet the Japanese commander.<sup>1</sup>

The New York Herald Tribune remarked that the decision which kept Wainwright on Corregidor was his own. It had been suggested that he leave Corregidor and continue the fight elsewhere as a commander of troops. To have left his men would have been no personal disgrace, since a precedent for such action had been set already by MacArthur. It would have saved for the Allied cause in the Pacific one of the United Nations' most able generals and spared him from wasting away in a Japanese prison camp. The Herald Tribune reported that in turning down the suggestion to leave Corregidor, Wainwright stated:

I have been one of the 'battling bastards of Bataan.' I have been with my men from the start and if captured I will share their lot. We have been through so much that my conscience would not let me leave before the final curtain.<sup>2</sup>

The long and grim struggle for the Philippines was over, approximately 184 days from when it began. With Corregidor and the other bay forts in their control, the Japanese Navy was able finally to sail into Manila Bay. The Manila Tribune, from its vantage point,

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<sup>1</sup>Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, pp. 122-23.

<sup>2</sup>7 May 1942, p. 2.

remarked the "units of the Japanese Navy steamed into Manila Bay for the first time on 9 May."<sup>1</sup>

During the period in which Wainwright was in command of the Philippines, an interesting aspect of news reporting and the power of the press in making heroes was revealed. Two examples are the Chicago Herald American and the New York Times. The Herald American, whose headlines very often bannered MacArthur's local victories as major engagements, made scant mention of Wainwright's efforts. When Corregidor underwent its heavy attack on 3 May and American troops were fighting for their lives, the Herald American had little to say. On 5 May, it noted Corregidor's final hours in one small statement on page one and in a small article of seventy words under the heading "Corregidor Still Defies Jap Blast," on page two.

The New York Times followed somewhat the same pattern. While MacArthur commanded the Philippine defenders, the Philippine epic and MacArthur rated approximately eighty-five mentions, of which forty-two were page one headlines or stories. When Wainwright succeeded MacArthur in mid-March, the Philippine epic up to its final surrender received less than forty mentions of which twenty were page one news, and most of these were focused on the fall of Bataan and Corregidor. Wainwright remained one of the unsung heroes of the Philippine story.

During Corregidor's last days when it was being swamped

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<sup>1</sup>10 May 1942, p. 1.

with a cross-fire that withered away its beach defenses, splintered its fortification and rained death and destruction on its soil and personnel, most of the nation's press turned elsewhere for its lead stories.

On 6 May when the end came, the story of Wainwright's Corregidor defense became page one news again in practically all American newspapers. The Chicago Herald American heralded the loss in three-inch headlines, eight columns wide, reading "CORREGIDOR LOSS - 7,000 YANKS - 5 SHIPS." In the same issue there appeared directly over the main headline a rare red bannered lead line, seven columns wide which read "With My Men - Wainwright." Most newspapers headlined the loss of Corregidor, but for all practical purposes, other than several days of soul searching by a nation and its press, the Philippine story was finished. It had been a focal point for news and it had provided more than its share of page one banner headlines, particularly under the leadership of MacArthur, but now it was not even of secondary importance to new events.

The New Haven Journal Courier, apologizing for the American press's neglectfulness of Corregidor, stated:

Developments elsewhere in the great struggle girdling the globe distracted attention from the resolute little band on Corregidor. The last lone stand of those American and Filipinos on Corregidor, in a sense forgotten in the onrush of war elsewhere, was part and parcel of the siege of Bataan.<sup>1</sup>

The American press saw elements of both gains and of profound weaknesses in Japan's Philippine victory. First and foremost was that

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<sup>1</sup>7 May 1942, p. 10.

her strength was spread thinly over a vast area which would become more and more dependent upon her ever increasing line of communication. Secondly, by winning all this space she had in no way increased her over-all strength. The newspapers also saw the fall of Bataan, Corregidor, and the Philippines as marking the zenith of Japanese efforts and the low point of American efforts in the Pacific theater.

The surrender of Corregidor, as in the case of the fall of Bataan brought on both praise and eulogies from a grateful nation. It also resulted in charges and countercharges as to who was to blame for the disaster. The Cleveland Plain Dealer reported that a note of bitterness was injected in Congress by Representative Charles I. Faddis (D-Pa.) who charged that Bataan and Corregidor fell because of a "blundering, muddling, indecisive policy of selfish isolationism and pacificism in the United States."<sup>1</sup>

The Arizona Republic stated: "The unexpected has happened. Corregidor has fallen and in conjunction with Bataan, there is a limit to human endurance. The loss of Bataan and Corregidor are monuments to a false philosophy."<sup>2</sup> The Denver Post declared: "Even the bravest of men must have something more than bare hands with which to fight." Then it added: "The loss of Corregidor is the direct result of the American plan of concentrating first on the knockout of Hitler in

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<sup>1</sup>8 May 1942, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>7 May 1942, Section II, p. 8.

Europe and allowing the Japanese war to slide along."<sup>1</sup>

The Daily Argus-Leader observed that neither Wainwright nor his men had a chance to win against the overwhelming power of the striking force of the Japanese. The paper considered the lack of adequate air defense as one of the main causes of the loss of the Philippines: "The Japanese had so completely dominated the air and the sea that relief on any scale has been impossible."<sup>2</sup>

Other newspapers expressed the loss of the Philippines as one of our greatest defeats and as a cause for national remorse. The Chicago Tribune referred to our defeats at the hands of the Japanese as "defeats such as never before been inflicted on our forces in our national history. At Bataan and Corregidor we surrendered more men and equipment than in any other battle or seige."<sup>3</sup> In evaluating the air strikes against artillery fire, the Dallas Morning News called attention to Wainwright's opinion that "it was the plunging fire of Japanese artillery that wrecked his defenses and not Japanese air power."<sup>4</sup> There was a tendency all through World War II to overrate the destruction of aerial bombing, the effects of which were more psychological than actual.

The Oregon Statesman believed that the outcome was inevitable and nothing short of an extensive relief expedition could have saved Corregidor. It implied that it was not the intention of our leaders to send

<sup>1</sup>6 May 1942, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>7 May 1942, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>6 May 1942, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>7 May 1942, Section II, pp. 2, 3.

such an expedition for "Corregidor no longer was of first rank significance." Nor could the Statesman see any victory, moral or otherwise, in our defeat: "No matter how heroic the men of Corregidor were, its surrender is a defeat for we have not been able to mass effective power. There the enemy is stronger."<sup>1</sup>

The Daily Oklahoman, reflecting a deep bitterness at our loss, described Corregidor as the "last outpost in the world that can be lost by the United Nations without gravely endangering the whole cause." As a reprimand to those at home--leaders and public alike--it stated:

Strong points cannot be indefinitely surrendered. On the day that Corregidor surrendered--starved out, there was a large strike in a Massachusetts defense plant, and official Washington was still playing politics with national safety by toadying to labor racketeers and spendthrift boondogglers. Official Washington still fiddles and compromises.

The Oklahoman interpreted our defeat as humiliating evidence of "too little and too late."<sup>2</sup>

When MacArthur heard of the final outcome, he gave unstinting praise to the fallen defenders:

Corregidor has sounded its own story at the mouth of its guns. It has scrolled its own epitaph on enemy tablets. But through the bloody haze of its last reverberating shot I shall always seem to see the vision of its grim, gaunt, and ghastly men still unafraid.<sup>3</sup>

The Denver Post, in a few short words before the fall of

28 May 1942, p. 12.

<sup>1</sup>7 May 1942, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>See for example the New York Times, 7 May 1942, p. 3, the Providence Journal, the Boston Globe, among many on the same date.

Corregidor, had summed up the consensus of the American press when it stated: "Frankly speaking we still have to formulate a definite strategy."<sup>1</sup> The comments of the American press seemed to imply that the administration leaders, notwithstanding six months of war experience, were still bungling along and had learned nothing from the Bataan debacle.

Wainwright's final decision on 6 May to surrender to the Japanese did not bring an immediate end to all resistance in the Philippines. The effectiveness of American-Filipino resistance and harassment was reflected in the prolonged Japanese refusal to complete surrender negotiations with Wainwright until all American-Filipino units in the archipelago had laid down their arms and surrendered on Japanese terms. By the end of the first week in June, the Japanese were in possession of the major islands of the archipelago.<sup>2</sup> On 9 June, the Japanese were finally satisfied that all formal resistance had ceased and in a curt message to Wainwright stated: "Your command ceases and you are now a prisoner of war."<sup>3</sup>

For all practical purposes, this ended a campaign that had been grossly underrated by the Japanese and scheduled to last about sixty days. The victory which Homma eagerly had sought was

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<sup>1</sup>3 May 1942, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup>These are Luzon, Mindanao, Mindoro, Panay, Cebu, Negros, Leyte, and Samar.

<sup>3</sup>Morton, Philippines, 499.

eventually achieved about six months after the first Japanese soldier landed on Philippine soil. Japan now controlled the Philippines. Her troops had conquered a nation but not its people. Japan had destroyed Filipino liberty but she could never kill the Filipino's courage or banish from his mind MacArthur's deeply etched promise "I shall return."

No matter how hard the Japanese tried, they were never completely successful in dominating the Philippines or its people. Although the Japanese held the main centers, American and Filipino guerrilla bands continued to harass the Japanese conquerors. The new masters had become victims of their own indiscretions. They were experiencing a lesson learned by all insatiable conquerors that conquered frontiers led to new borders and these in turn led to new horizons and to new fighters of freedom who refuse to be overcome.

Japan's problem was to make the right decision. Her master-minds in Tokyo were becoming more and more aware that the questions of war and strategy were not quite as simple as they had appeared to be in the blush of the first victories. Japanese commanders realized that MacArthur's presence in Australia represented an ominous sign and a threat that had not been considered in their original plans of conquest.

A large number of American newspapers were convinced that with MacArthur in Australia, Japan's next efforts would be in that direction. This feeling also prevailed in Australia where the Australians, from the highest to the lowest, were firmly convinced that a Japanese

invasion of their country was imminent.

The Emporia Daily Gazette had prophesied many problems for Japan. In March the paper had stated:

Japan's success requires that she protect her triumphs. To play it safe the attack must go on against Australia and maybe New Zealand. But in this decision lies the danger of error. Japan will find Australia harder to subdue than colonial lands. Here she will be faced by Australians fighting to save their homeland.<sup>1</sup>

The Richmond Times Dispatch had observed in April that all indications pointed to the invasion of Port Moresby in New Guinea, then of New Caledonia, New Zealand, and finally Australia. The Dispatch viewed this as no cause for alarm. Like most American newspapers, the paper believed that MacArthur would make the difference between victory or defeat for the Australians.<sup>2</sup>

The alarm and apprehension among the Japanese because of the developing American offensive in Australia was interpreted by the Chicago Tribune to mean that the Japanese would increase their effort to cut our lines of communication with Australia by carrying out "naval operations directed from the Gilbert and Marshall Islands through the Solomons and the New Hebrides."<sup>3</sup> A month earlier this same newspaper had remarked:

It is fantastic to think in terms of a Japanese invasion of Australia beyond some coastal points in the north. Australia's

<sup>1</sup>16 March 1942, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>2 April 1942, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>4 May 1942, p. 114.

west coast cannot be blockaded except by complete control of the Indian Ocean. An attempt to blockade Australia would scatter the enemy's forces and expose them to disastrous hazards.<sup>1</sup>

Japan carried out regular harassing air raids and bombing attacks against the Port Darwin area in North Australia but she made no attempt to invade the island continent itself. The initiative had been taken out of her hands by MacArthur's sweeping change of Australia's passive defense plans. He not only discarded the Brisbane defensive line, behind which the Australians would make their last stand, but carried the offensive a thousand miles further north into New Guinea where he first blocked, then stopped, and finally rolled back the Japanese invaders. Australia had been saved and he was on his way to fulfill his promise to the Filipinos that he would return to the Philippines.

Even though they made some additional progress, the zenith of the Japanese conquest was reached with the fall of Corregidor. The completion of the Philippine campaign on 9 June concluded for the Japanese war machine one of the greatest conquests in the annals of military history. Even the accomplishment of the vaunted Nazi war machine could not compare in magnitude or achievement. Other than in the Philippines where its timetable was completely disrupted, the rigid time schedule, established by the Imperial General Headquarters to gain assigned objectives, was not only met but surpassed in some instances as key objectives fell one after another like falling dominoes.

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<sup>1</sup>5 April 1942, p. 14.

Listed below is a summary of Japanese conquests:<sup>1</sup>

Key Objectives	Date Fell	Days of Operation
Hong Kong	25 December 1941	18
Manila	2 January 1942	10
Singapore	15 February 1942	15
Batavia	5 March 1942	6
Bataan	9 April 1942	94
Burma	1 May 1942	54
Corregidor	6 May 1942	27
Philippines	9 June 1942	183

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<sup>1</sup>Minneapolis Star Journal, 6 May 1942; Los Angeles Times, 10 April 1942, Part II, p. 4. In part from both. The number of days shown reflect the days taken to capture the objective after it became the main target. Formal operations were not completed in the Philippines until 9 June.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

The epic of MacArthur's defense of the Philippines is a unique story unparalleled in the military history of the United States and cannot be explored in its entirety from official written documents or other conflicting works which for one reason or another leave many questions unanswered.

This paper, in turn, has touched on only the bare summary of events in the over-all Pacific effort. Its purpose is not to praise, condemn, or acquit any one person, agency, or policy but to present those facts as gleaned from the American press which may add something of value to what already has been written about MacArthur and his fight against the Japanese on Bataan and Corregidor.

The importance and value of a study of this nature is that the press, particularly in wartime, is both a narrator and interpreter of the events of the day and of those who make history. Such press accounts provide the public with the prejudices and emotions of the period. Yet in writing a study from sensational wartime headlines and stories, care must be taken to avoid the danger of developing a warped sense of history. An excellent example, without taking due credit

away from General MacArthur's genius as a military strategist and tactician, is that the headlines and page one stories describing the Philippine epic, in the early months of the Pacific conflict, focus mostly on MacArthur. With such unrivalled publicity, it is easy to draw the wrong conclusions for the headlines gave the impression that MacArthur was the only general in the Philippines and was winning the war single handed. There were sixteen other generals on Bataan who in many cases provided MacArthur with much of the brainwork and military skill he needed during the spectacular withdrawal from the beaches and for the outstanding defense of Bataan.

The headlines and stories also gave the impression that MacArthur was always in the field leading his troops. His only visit to Bataan was made on 10 January for a quick inspection of the main battle positions. He spent most of his time in the Malinta tunnel on Corregidor where his headquarters were located. However, by rounding off the headlines and more emotional press stories, whose praises at times reached adulation, with the more objective editorials valid deductions can be drawn.

Regardless of what the headlines and the press stories reflected, Bataan was a defeat for MacArthur. Yet it was MacArthur who provided the spark and leadership from the early months of war, and who acted as the catalyst for the eventual drive against the Japanese in the Southwest Pacific Area. In about three years he turned the ignominious defeat of Bataan and Corregidor into an extraordinary

victory and returned to the Philippines.

The events on Bataan and in the Philippines cannot leave either the Filipinos or the Americans other than highly gratified with the courage of their leaders and their defenders. Fighting against the impossible they stopped a determined and overpowering foe who in quick succession had struck a devastating blow against Pearl Harbor, seized Hong Kong, Guam and Wake, captured Malaya and Singapore, invaded the Netherland East Indies, and were in the process of taking other areas in the Far East.

By the middle of February, the Allied cause had sunk to a new low. It was with a sense of foreboding that the American press and people watched with apprehension as the Japanese juggernaut roamed the South Pacific at will, chewing up and pulverizing everything in its path until it was momentarily halted by the defenders of Bataan.

The Bataan defenders, poorly equipped against insurmountable odds and fighting a hopeless battle, captured the imagination of the American people and the press as nothing else could. It was, said one American paper, "a beacon of light which shone forth in a stormy sea,"<sup>1</sup> and it was the only bright spot in the dismal picture of resounding defeats.

It was the strategy of the defenders and their tenacious stand on Bataan that focused the attention of the American press on its forceful leader, General MacArthur. In him the press found the ingredients

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<sup>1</sup>Arizona Republic, 11 April 1942, Sec. Two, p. 8.

of a ready-made hero, a personality who showed strength not weakness, courage not fear, who led not followed, and above all, one who was willing to carry on the torch of freedom.

MacArthur was well known to the American public for his daring exploits in World War I. An index of the strong impact he made on people can be seen in William Allen White's description of the General after their first meeting at Cologne, Germany, in 1918:

Into this austere and formal situation flashed General Douglas MacArthur, aged thirty-eight, with a grace and charm of a stage hero. Never have I met before so vivid a man, so captivating a man, so magnetic a man. He is all Barrymore and John Drew hope to be. And how he could talk.<sup>1</sup>

These were the words of a fifty year old veteran newsman and well known editor who was respected for his objectivity.

In MacArthur, the people found a man who provided a ray of hope and who by example gave renewed courage and faith. He personified the difference between pessimism and optimism and between defeat and victory. The high esteem and admiration that his countrymen had for him was manifested in many forms. Babies were named for him, many private and public buildings were renamed in his honor as were streets and town squares.

In March 1942 his name was used to bolster the lagging Red Cross Drive which an indifferent public had failed to support. It was assumed that by using MacArthur's name the public would dig deeper

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Johnson, William Allen White's America, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1945), p. 299.

into their pockets. In the following month MacArthur buttons went on sale at two cents each over the counter and five cents each through the mail. Sales in the first three weeks totalled 255,940 in Chicago and 258,440 in New York.<sup>1</sup> There is no question that MacArthur had captivated the imagination of the press and the public alike. MacArthur, always aware of the power of the press and being sensitive about history, did little to antagonize the press and much to ease its path. The press in turn gave him a press coverage unrivalled by most living military or political leaders.

The American press, with its fingers on the pulse beat of the nation, was ahead of the administration in anticipating needed changes. It took the lead in the struggle to change the one-sided global strategy with its emphasis on the defeat of Hitler first and have it re-evaluated so that it became a global strategy in the true sense of the word. Even the New York Times, a consistent supporter of the administration, pointed out from time to time in its editorials that the global conflict was an "Indivisible" war and not a number one and number two war. Most editorials called for continual aid to the defenders on Bataan.

The amount of press support for MacArthur and the Pacific effort can be measured by the amount of criticism against the administration for its conduct of the war. The criticism in the main questioned the validity of the Washington-London "Europe First" policy.

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Tribune, 1 April 1942, p. 2.

Against the Administration	78%
For the Administration	10%
Against Congress	06%
Against the people	06%

Although the greatest amount of criticism came from the south and southwest states where the revolt against the President was the greatest it was not restricted to this area, nor was the newspaper criticism limited to a single political group as the following results will show.

Independent Newspapers	64%
Independent Democratic Newspapers	22%
Republican Newspapers	06%
Democratic Newspapers	05%
Other Newspapers	03%

In the eyes of the American press our Pacific blunders were greater and costlier than those of the Japanese. Our first and greatest blunder was in underestimating the Japanese. As a nation we placed too low a value on his skill, strength, and imagination. The second mistake was that of a leadership which was reluctant to heed a public opinion demanding timely and adequate aid to the Pacific and MacArthur. There were no illusions among the American press about the need for reinforcements in the Pacific theater. Urgency and its synonyms were indeed the words on every tongue, and every eye was upon the Pacific. Although displeasure was voiced by many divergent groups, the administration leaders in Washington still concentrated their major efforts toward Europe.

MacArthur took sharp issue with the "Navy Brass" for its refusal to break through to the Philippines with supplies and reinforcements.

MacArthur was firmly convinced that the Japanese blockade could have been successfully breached without excessive losses. In light of the actual losses at Pearl Harbor, MacArthur's conviction had very little validity up to the invasion of Davao on 20 December and no validity after the main landings on 22 December. Our navy was at that time in no position to sail into the Philippines and challenge the Japanese Navy which had a superior naval arm and the advantage of land bases for both naval and army aircraft.

While the American press expressed general approval of MacArthur and highly praised his conduct of the war, it was in the main highly critical of the administration and its leaders, not so much for their aims to win the war but of their conduct of the war and of their leadership. The press also raised questions about the political astuteness of the national leaders. Some editors were convinced that the American leaders, because of political naiveness, were making the nation a pawn in the hands of more able statesmen and devious agents. An Atlantic policy which sent troops to Great Britain and a Pacific policy which brought the Pacific conflict to within a measurable distance of over-all defeat seemed ample proof to many that the administration leaders had fallen under the power of sinister foreigners.

Even though the emotional headlines misled the average reader of the true military situation in the Philippines for the first several months of the war, the editorials rounded them off, and despite the background of complex personalities, world issues, wartime censorship

and the intrusion of a wartime psychosis, the United States press, in the main, gave a fairly accurate interpretation of the Philippine epic.

In a final evaluation of the American press in gathering, analyzing, and reporting the news, it can be said that while the headlines provided the gist of the news which proved satisfying to the adherents of headline theology, the editorials rounded out the sensational headlines and emotional stories and told the story of the Philippines well. And in telling the story the United States press helped to formulate and guide public opinion.

APPENDIX A

DIRECTORY OF NEWSPAPERS

Alabama--	<u>Mobile Register</u> ,	(Ind-Dem) <sup>a</sup>	George Cox <sup>b</sup>	24,508 <sup>c</sup>
Alaska--	<u>Alaska Empire</u> ,	(Ind-Dem)	Robert Roberts (Juneau) <sup>d</sup>	3,108
Arizona--	<u>Arizona Republic</u> ,	(Ind)	J. W. Spears (Phoenix)	44,441
Arkansas--	<u>Arkansas Democrat</u> ,	(Dem)	K. A. Engel (Little Rock)	58,384
California--	<u>Los Angeles Times</u> ,	(Ind-Rep)	( ) <sup>e</sup>	406,384
	<u>San Francisco Chronicle</u> ,	(Rep)	P. C. Smith	195,811
Colorado--	<u>Denver Post</u> ,	(Ind)	W. C. Shepherd	264,595
Connecticut--	<u>New Haven Journal Courier</u> ,	(Ind)	J. W. Schaefer	23,389
Delaware--	<u>Delaware State News</u> ,	(Ind-Dem)	James Wickes	-----
Dist. of Col.--	<u>Washington Post</u> ,	(Ind)	Eugene Myers (Pub.)	142,182
	<u>Washington Star</u> ,	(Ind)	T. W. Noyes	163,955
Florida--	<u>Miami Herald</u> ,	(Ind)	Ellis Hollus	106,956
Georgia--	<u>Atlanta Constitution</u> ,	(Dem)	Clark Howell	137,279
Idaho--	<u>Idaho Daily Statesman</u> ,	(Rep)	J. W. Hart (Boise)	22,026
Illinois--	<u>Chicago Herald-American</u> ,	(Ind)	( ) <sup>e</sup>	857,318
	<u>Chicago Daily News</u> ,	(Ind)	Paul S. Mowrer	457,981
	<u>Chicago Tribune</u> ,	(Ind)	Col. Robert McCormick	1,144,734

Indiana-- <u>Indianapolis Star</u> , (Ind-Rep) John C. Shaffer	175,519
Iowa-- <u>Des Moines Register</u> , (Ind) Harvey Ingham	376,947
Kansas-- <u>Emporia Daily Gazette</u> , (Ind) William A. White	7,067
<u>Lawrence Journal World</u> , (Rep) W.C. Simons	5,694
Kentucky-- <u>Louisville Times</u> , (Ind) Tom Wallace	133,858
Louisiana-- <u>Times Picayune</u> , (Ind-Dem) L. K. Nicholson (New Orleans)	203,600
Maine-- <u>Bangor Daily News</u> , (Ind) Reginald Kauffman	46,603
Maryland-- <u>Baltimore Sun</u> , (Ind-Dem) J. W. Owens	221,491
<u>Hagerstown Herald</u> , (Rep) C. N. Baylor	4,878
Massachusetts-- <u>Boston Globe</u> , (Ind) W. O. Taylor	322,177
<u>Boston Herald</u> , (Ind-Rep) Frank Buxton	173,480
<u>Christian Science Monitor</u> , (Non-Partisan) ( ) <sup>e</sup>	128,581
Michigan-- <u>Detroit Free Press</u> , (Ind) D. D. Martin	329,682
Minnesota-- <u>Minneapolis Star Journal</u> , (Ind) R. L. Walters	240,172
Mississippi-- <u>Jackson Daily News</u> , (Dem) Fredrick Sullens	31,543
Missouri-- <u>St. Louis Post Dispatch</u> , (Ind-Dem) Joseph Pulitzer	310,995
Montana-- <u>Montana Standard</u> , (Ind-Dem) E. G. Leipheimer (Butte)	26,303
Nebraska-- <u>Nebraska State Journal</u> , (Ind) J. Lawrence (Lincoln)	25,678
Nevada-- <u>Nevada State Journal</u> , (Dem) Joseph McDonald (Reno)	9,077
New Hampshire-- <u>Concord Monitor &amp; New Hampshire Free Patriot</u> , (Ind) James M. Langley	8,977
New Jersey-- <u>Newark Star-Ledger</u> , (Ind) Philip Hochstein	107,521

New Mexico--	<u>Albuquerque Journal</u> , (Ind) H. P. Pickrell	20,641
	<u>Albuquerque Tribune</u> , (Ind) E. H. Shaffer	14,012
New York--	<u>New York Times</u> , (Ind-Dem) Charles Merz	788,546
	<u>New York Herald Tribune</u> , (Ind-Rep) Ogden Reid	538,005
North Carolina--	<u>Greensboro Daily News</u> , (Ind) ( ) <sup>e</sup>	53,602
North Dakota--	<u>Bismarck Tribune</u> , (Ind) K. W. Simons	7,274
Ohio--	<u>Cleveland Plain Dealer</u> , (Ind-Dem) Paul Bellamy	404,582
Oklahoma--	<u>Oklahoman</u> , (Ind-Dem) E. K. Gaylord	159,706
Oregon--	<u>Oregon Statesman</u> , (Rep) R. C. Curtis (Salem)	9,832
Pennsylvania--	<u>Philadelphia Inquirer</u> , (Ind) John T. Custis	1,106,299
	<u>Pittsburg Courier</u> , (Ind) R. L. Vann	141,525
Rhode Island--	<u>Providence Journal</u> , (Ind) Sevellon Brown	125,531
	<u>Pawtucket Times</u> , (Ind) ( ) <sup>e</sup>	31,975
South Carolina--	<u>State</u> , (Dem) S. A. Latimer (Columbia)	44,631
South Dakota--	<u>Daily Argus-Leader</u> , (Ind-Rep) C. M. Day (Sioux Falls)	42,534
Tennessee--	<u>Nashville Banner</u> , (Ind) G. H. Armistead, Sr.	70,578
Texas--	<u>Dallas Morning News</u> , (Ind-Dem) J. J. Taylor	123,261
Utah--	<u>Salt Lake Tribune</u> , (Ind) G. B. Heal	104,533
Vermont--	<u>Burlington Free Press</u> , (Ind-Rep) E. F. Crane	19,416
Virginia--	<u>Richmond Times-Dispatch</u> , (Ind-Dem) Virginius Dabney	107,099
Washington--	<u>Seattle Post Intelligencer</u> , (Ind) John Boettinger	207,962
West Virginia--	<u>Wheeling News Register</u> , (Ind-Dem) R. Rafferty	28,401
Wisconsin--	<u>Beloit Daily News</u> , (Ind) Mason Dobson	11,451

Wyoming-- <u>Wyoming State Tribune</u> , (Rep) J. C. Thompson (Cheyenne)	10,251
Hawaii-- <u>Honolulu Star Bulletin</u> , (Rep) Riley H. Allen	48,095
Philippines-- <u>Manila Tribune</u> , (Ind) D. T. Boguslav	125,531

<sup>a</sup>Recap

Ind-----Independent-----	32
Ind-Rep--- Independent-Republican-----	6
Ind-Dem---Independent-Democrat-----	13
Dem-----Democrat-----	5
Rep-----Republican-----	7
Non-Partisan-----	1

<sup>b</sup>Indicates editor unless indicated otherwise.

<sup>c</sup>Circulation figures for first part of 1942.

<sup>d</sup>Cities in which published.

<sup>e</sup>No name given of editor.

Source: J. Percy H. Johnson, (ed.), Ayer & Son's Directory-  
Newspapers and Periodicals, (Pennsylvania: N. W. Ayers & Son's Inc.,  
1942.)

APPENDIX B

Here is exact copy of the Death Bataan

In Re: ORDER TO KILL BATAAN CAPTIVES

On April 3rd, next year, 1942, our corps landed from Lingayen Bay and joined to the battle at the western foot of Mariberes (sic) in Bataan.

"On April 9th, Bataan fell at last, and sixty thousand prisoners were in the hands of the Japanese Army. In Manila an Army Order was issued to the effect that . . . "EVERY TROOP WHICH FOUGHT AGAINST OUR ARMY ON THE BATAAN SHOULD BE WIPED OUT THOROUGHLY, WHETHER HE SURRENDERED OR NOT, AND ANY AMERICAN CAPTIVE WHO'S UNABLE TO CONTINUE MARCHING ALL THE WAY TO THE CONCENTRATION CAMP SHOULD BE PUT TO DEATH IN THE AREA 200 METERS OFF THE HIGHWAY."

(Extracted from "Dawn of the Philippines"  
p. 14. by Nobuhiko Jimbo Colonel Japanese Army)

Source: Office Chief of Military History, a copy of this Order is on file at the OCMH. Above Order obtain 11 Aug 67 from OCMH.

APPENDIX C

C O P Y

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

19 December 1967

LTC Anthony Masi, USA-Ret.  
41 Briarbrook Drive  
North Kingston, Rhode Island 02852

Dear Colonel Masi:

Thank you for sending me a copy of General Bluemel's letter. I am still unconvinced of the authenticity of the alleged order. My doubts are based on several points. First of all, if the order was available, why was it not introduced into evidence in Homma's trial, where all sorts of far more dubious material was used? Second, if the order was issued, why was it not followed? Despite the brutalities inflicted by the Japanese, it is clear that no concerted policy of executing prisoners was carried out, and no other Japanese ever testified that he was ordered, as a matter of general policy, to kill prisoners. Although many of the prisoners died, the actual number who died between the surrender and the time the group reached prisoner camp represented only about 10% of the total captured, hardly indicative of a general policy to execute prisoners. Third, if there was a general policy to kill the prisoners, why did the Japanese prepare Camp O'Donnell to receive them, and why were assembly points prepared on the route to O'Donnell? If the prisoners were to be executed, southern Bataan was as good a place as any to do so. The military situation was such that it made little sense to detail large numbers of Japanese troops as guards and escorts if the prisoners were indeed to be executed. Fourth, has anyone seen the original of the alleged order, in Japanese? Or do we have only COL. Jinbo's word that it was ever issued? Who translated the alleged order and how accurate is the translation? Did COL. Jinbo make up a story about an order as a means of covering or excusing his own actions? If he was indeed ordered to execute Roxas, why didn't he do so, or was the order he refers to only for a limited number of prisoners, and when was it supposedly issued? The fact that General Bluemel has "a copy of the order" doesn't prove its authenticity. The material in Toland's book refers only to the mistreatment of Bluemel and says nothing about any such order. (You are right, incidentally, in assuming that Toland based much of his account on the

(APPENDIX D, continued)

earlier version of my book, written originally as a Master's thesis, and then enlarged and rewritten later as a book.)

For all of these reasons, plus my general knowledge of the situation, I do not believe that the order described was ever issued by General Homma.

In response to your question about ICAF correspondence courses, I am enclosing an information pamphlet (which includes an application form).

I hope that you and yours will enjoy a most pleasant holiday season.

Sincerely,

s/Stanley L. Falk

STANLEY L. FALK  
Associate Professor,  
National Security Affairs

APPENDIX D

C O P Y

5 Colonial Ridge Drive  
M. R. No. 1  
Yardley, Pa. 19067

27 November 1967

Lt Col Anthony Masi  
41 Briarbrook Drive  
North Kingston, R. I. 02852

Dear Colonel Masi:

I regret the delay in replying to your letter of 15 November 1967, in which you requested my assistance in clarifying the validity and origin of the order "To kill Bataan Captives".

There is a Jap Colonel Nobuhiko Jinbo. Colonel Russell P. (Red) Reeder has his address and has, through a Jap Dr. Tadski Yabe, received oral authority to use in Reeder's History of World War II the order "to kill Bataan Captives".

Colonel Jimbo wrote a book "Dawn of the Philippines" in which the order appeared. It pertained to Jinbo's orders to execute a prominent Filipino Manuel Roxas. I had dinner with Roxas after my release as prisoner of war.

A copy of the order was given to me by Dean Sherry, a retired Judge of the Superior Court of California. Sherry, my very good friend, was a POW with most of the 3 years, 4 months and 20 days of our incarceration. Sherry was a Major at the outbreak of the War with Japan and was in charge of the Jap civilians interned in Manila, PI and vicinity. They were surprised and amazed that the treatment which was given them was in accord with the Geneva Convention. Sherry has many friends amongst these Japs. He has visited them in Japan. Dr. Yabe is one of them. He was a Doctor in the P.I. at the outbreak of our War with Japan and now lives in Japan.

I assure you that from personal, experience the order was strictly followed. Had I been unable to get up I would have been shot and killed there. This incident is well described in "But Not In Shame" by John Toland on Page 352 of the paperback issue. It can be

## (APPENDIX D, continued)

bought for 95 cents. It is a Signet Book, published by the New American Library. The part of Toland's book on Bataan and the Death March is the best I have read.

I was on the Death March for 3 days and 2 nights. I heard shots fired in the Filipino Column marching ahead of us and a few minutes later saw dead bodies with a bullet hole in their heads.

The brutality practiced on Bataan prisoners was entirely uncalled for.

There has been too much wasted sympathy on the Japs for the treatment they gave us.

There has been a hostility towards us in the State Department, in the Armed Services Committee in the House of Representatives and some parts of the Army.

The Philippine Army fought with the cast-off weapons of World War I, with some types of ammunition that seldom exploded. I would like to have seen the critics do any better under the same circumstances and I believe most of them could not have done as good. In fact, they would have done worse.

Sincerely,

s/Clifford Bluemel

CLIFFORD BLUEMEL  
Brig Genl, USA, RET

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