

BATAAN—CORREG

A message from General Wainwright at Fort Mills just received at the War Department states that the Japanese attack on Bataan peninsula succeeded in enveloping the east flank of our lines, in the position held by the Second Corps. An attack by the First Corps, ordered to relieve the situation, failed due to complete physical exhaustion of the troops.

Full details are not available, but this situation indicates the probability that the defenses on Bataan have been overcome.

—*War Dept. Communiqué Number 183, April 9, 1942.*



The end for Bataan was, of course, inevitable. Knowing the men of Bataan as I know them, I am sure many of them died firmly believing help was on the way. Many told me they had rather die than be captured. Now the survivors can only hope for early American victory to end their ordeal as prisoners.

—*Clark Lee, AP Correspondent, Melbourne, April 10, 1942.*



The epic of Bataan Peninsula ended today with the Japanese victorious through the sheer overwhelming weight of hordes of fresh troops—and with most of the 36,853 American and Filipino soldiers slain or facing captivity.

Cut off from reinforcements, outnumbered by five, six, seven or even eight to one, tragically deficient in air power and exhausted by short rations, disease and constant battle, a courageous band of fighting men was forced to a bitter but inevitable defeat.

—*AP dispatch, Washington, April 9, 1942.*



The exhausted little army surrendered to impossible odds on April 9.

American and Filipino fighters and the American nurses who stood by them to the end were overwhelmed after 15 days and 15 nights of ceaseless battle that climaxed 98 days in which they suffered the tortures of hell.

They were pounded in those 15 days by thousands of fresh Jap shock troops, the pick of the Mikado's armies.

They were hammered hour after hour by dive bombers and high-level bombers that blew an American field hospital sky high, with more than 100 casualties.

They were battered by massed tanks and artillery that churned the defenders' foxholes.

All these blows they withstood unflinchingly. Then fever, hunger and fatigue cut away their strength.

Even in the final showdown, with more men killed by disease and malnutrition than by Jap bullets, many of the remnants swam and rowed across the four-mile water gap

to bring nurses and wounded to Corregidor.

Never have I seen such brave men and women as in those last days on Bataan. They were beaten, but it was a fight that ought to make every American bow his head in tribute.

At dawn April 9 the water was still thick with boats bound for Corregidor and Japanese planes started bombing and machine-gunning them. Not a boat was lost, thanks to the deadly fire of anti-aircraft guns on Corregidor and machine guns on the boats.

That morning Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright ordered the evacuation to cease, because the white flag was being taken forward and the truce consequently might be endangered and the hardships of the sick, hungry men on the peninsula increased.

The great fires and explosions that I saw in the Philippines are still vivid in my mind, but I remember even more vividly the little flashes of light I saw on Bataan the night of April 9, after the surrender.

They came from soldiers hidden on the shore, and were from flashlights. They

all repeated patiently, to Corregidor, five miles away: . . .

----- (SOS) -----

—*Frank Hewlett, UP dispatches, April 9, 21, '42.*



Nurses and soldiers of Bataan, dazed with the shock of battle, sought rest and sleep today within the walls of Corregidor fortress, itself battered by Japanese bombs.

They came last night, brave refugees from the long battle that was gloriously lost, swimming through shark-infested waters of the channel between Bataan and this Manila Bay fortress, or rowing pitifully small boats through bombs and vicious machine-gun blasts from enemy planes.

During the night we looked across the channel toward Bataan and heard booming explosions and saw many-colored fires as the defenders, in their last defiant action, destroyed munition dumps and fuel, and anything else that might be valuable to the ever-pressing enemy.

We on Corregidor had heard over short-wave radio from the United States of the fall of Bataan, after the defenders' gallant three-month stand.

The soldiers of Corregidor, themselves veterans of scores of pounding Japanese bombing raids, wept unashamed at the announcer's words:

"Bataan has fallen."

It was the short-wave broadcast of "The Voice of Freedom," from San Francisco.

"Filipino and American troops of this war-ravaged, blood stained peninsula have laid down their arms," the announcer said.

**Lest we forget—
what happened
what was said
a year ago today.**

IDOR SCRAPBOOK

"With heads bloody but unbowed, they have yielded to the superior force and numbers of the enemy," the radio continued.

"The world will long remember the epic struggle the Filipinos and Americans put up in the jungle fastness and along the rugged Bataan coast line. They have stood up without complaint under the constant and gruelling fire of the enemy for more than three months.

"Besieged on land and blockaded from the sea, cut off from all sources of help, these intrepid fighters have borne all that human endurance could bear."

We remained silent, listening, but we also could hear the firing which we now knew as the end of the valiant fight on Bataan.

"But what sustained them through all these months of incessant battle was a force more than physical," the voice said.

"It was the thought of their native land and all it holds most dear to them, the thought of freedom and dignity, and pride in these most priceless of all human prerogatives."

—Dean Schedler, AP Correspondent, Corregidor Fortress, April 9.

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We have nothing but praise and admiration for the commanders and the men who have conducted the epic chapter in American history.

This is only a temporary loss. We shall not stop until we drive the invaders from the islands.

—Secretary of War Stimson, April 9, 1942.

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The fall of Bataan is no easier to bear because we have known that it was only a question of how long the Filipino and American forces could hold out. . . . So they fought knowing that they themselves had no hope. This is the very heart of courage, transcending all other acts of which men are capable and the surest proof that man is more than his flesh, his blood, his bones, and his appetites. On this proof as on a rock, that there is in all men a capacity to live and a willingness to die for things which they themselves can never hope to enjoy, there rests the whole of man's dignity, and the title to all his rights. Were man not the kind of creature who can pursue more than his own happiness, he would never have imagined his freedom, much less have sought it.

—Walter Lippman, "Today and Tomorrow", April 9, 1942.

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The Japanese, appraising the results of their efforts, must realize that if 9,000 Americans and 29,000 Filipinos, the greater part of the latter almost untrained, can hold up six times their number of Japanese troops, with complete air superiority, for ninety days, then Japan's prospects are not very bright for the day when Americans shall face them in far greater numbers with better equipment by land, sea and air.

—Major George Fielding Eliot, April 9, 1942.

APRIL 9, 1943

The only surviving reputation for sincerity, reliability, or potential capacity to conquer is that of America.

And that reputation is based not on Pearl Harbor, where we fought heroically—but on the sustained success of our defense of the Philippines and the honesty of our pledge of independence to the Filipinos.

It is obvious to all that the Filipinos believe in us and that we have had in mind to justify their faith by fulfilling our promises and exemplifying our principles of freedom.

We have not abandoned the Philippines with the empty and meaningless assertion that we would return later and recapture them.

We have stood our ground, fought a courageous fight, and maintained the only Occidental reputation in the Orient which is today worth a tinker's dam. . . .

Wherefore we cannot afford under any circumstances to lose our fight in the Philippines, and with that our standing in the Orient.

—Times-Herald, April 9, 1942.

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The whole world of free men will join in paying tribute to the magnificent stand made by the American and Filipino troops in the Philippine Islands. They have written a chapter of stubborn heroism which will never be forgotten.

—London Mail, April 9, 1942.

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The Bataan campaign was a defense that astonished the world. The long-drawn out resistance will rank with the defense of Malta, Tobruk and Sevastopol among the outstanding episodes of the war.

—London News Chronicle, April 9, 1942.

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One aspect of the fight on Bataan has not received much attention, but it may prove, in the long run, the most important phase of the struggle. It has made the business of throwing the Japanese out of the Philippines well worth while in the eyes of the common soldier.

After all, the dead on that peninsula are presumably more Filipinos than Americans. It was a great fight, one that will shine in military history; but the glory is not all ours. A large part of it belongs to the Little Brown Brothers, who acquitted himself so manfully that the American must take off his hat to the Filipino.

—Gerald W. Johnson, "Salvage from Bataan", Baltimore Evening Sun, April 10, 1942.

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The Bataan force went out as it would have wished—fighting to the end of its flickering, forlorn hope.

No army has ever done so much with so little.

Nothing became it more than its last hour of trial and agony.

To the weeping mothers of its dead I only say that the sacrifice halo of Jesus of Nazareth has descended upon their sons and that God has taken them unto Himself.

—General Douglas MacArthur, April 10, 1942.

The Spring advances, green over tears and blood. The enemy rallies for his supreme, world-wide attack. The giant, democracy, like some force from the awakening earth, stirs and listens to Corregidor's guns. Once on his feet he will not sleep, he will not rest, till he wins victory. But there is not much time.

On Bataan the dead sleep quietly. Their monument will be what the living achieve before the year is out. The whole free earth, in the noble words of the old Greek, will be their sepulcher.

—New York Times Editorial, April 10, 1942.

Last Days of Corregidor

Our flag still flies on the beleaguered island fortress of Corregidor. . . . Bataan has fallen, but Corregidor will carry on. On this mighty fortress—a pearl of great price on which the enemy has set his covetous eyes—the spirit of Bataan will continue to live.

—Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, April 11, 1942.

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The enemy opened an intense artillery bombardment of our island forts from new positions in Cavite and Bataan. Corregidor was severely shelled, while Forts Hughes and Drum also drew considerable fire.

Our guns returned the fire, silencing at least three enemy batteries and breaking up three truck and troop concentrations in Bataan. Five dive-bombing raids were made on Corregidor. In addition, enemy light bombers, operating at high altitudes, made several attacks on Corregidor and Fort Hughes. One Japanese bomber was hit by our anti-aircraft artillery.

—Army Communique, April 19, 1942.

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People of Malta send their warm greetings to the gallant defenders of Corregidor. They have watched with profound admiration the magnificent fight you have put up which has been a great inspiration to us all. You are giving untold assistance to the Allied cause. God grant you may soon reap the fruits of victory.

—Gen. Sir William George Shedden Doble, Governor of Malta, War Dept. Communique No. 206, April 26, 1942.

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The officers and enlisted men on Corregidor deeply appreciate the sentiments expressed in your message. In our efforts to contribute to the common cause of freedom for which the Philippine and American troops are now fighting, we are inspired and encouraged by the historic stand which has been made by the gallant defenders of Malta.

With God's help, both our peoples shall soon join hands across the seas in celebrating the return of freedom to the democratic nations of the world.

—Lt. General Jonathan Wainwright, War Dept. Communique No. 206, April 26, 1942.

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During the recent weeks, we have been following with growing admiration the day-by-day accounts of your heroic stand against the mounting intensity of bombardment by enemy planes and heavy siege guns.

In spite of all the handicaps of complete isolation, lack of food and ammunition, you have given the world a shin-

ing example of patriotic fortitude and self-sacrifice. The American people ask no finer example of tenacity, resourcefulness and steadfast courage.

The calm determination of your personal leadership in a desperate situation sets a standard of duty for our soldiers throughout the world. In every camp and on every naval vessel, soldiers, sailors, and marines are inspired by the gallant struggle of their comrades in the Philippines. The workmen in our shipyards and munitions plants redouble their efforts because of your example.

You and your devoted followers have become the living symbols of our war aims and the guarantee of victory.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt, May 5, 1942.

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Philippine theater: The War Department has received a message from Corregidor advising that resistance of our troops has been overcome. Fighting has ceased, and terms are being arranged covering the capitulation of the island forts in Manila Bay.

—War Department Communique, May 6, 1942.

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The big guns of Corregidor now speak no more.

—New York Herald Tribune, May 7, 1942.

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Corregidor joins Bataan in the heart of America.

—Daily Worker, May 7, 1942.

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There will be no dismay at the news of the fall of Corregidor; rather will there be a feeling of pride and admiration. The fact is, that a very small force of brave men has held the world's attention by an amazing stand against the armed might of a foe greatly superior in manpower and machines. . . .

The stand there upset Japan's war strategy and gained precious time. Corregidor takes its place in world history. We had our Tobruk. America has its Corregidor.

Standing to that spirit of dauntless gallantry we cannot lose. Our heads are high; our hearts are not heavy. We shall go on.

—Australian Prime Minister John Curtin, May 7, 1942.

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The tributes all of us are paying the heroes of Corregidor make us feel better. But the words are not enough. It was their acts that counted. Only our acts count now—on the home front, on the production line, and in battle—

"Remember Corregidor!"

—Editorial, Washington Daily News, May 7, 1942.

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Corregidor needs no comment from me. It 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 a vision of grim, gaunt, ghostly men, still unafraid.

—General Douglas MacArthur, May 7, 1942.

Corregidor and Bataan stand for reverses that are but preludes to victory.

—Cordell Hull, May 7, 1942.