

L.T. SUNOCO. THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1942

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

This, tonight, is a nation saddened but proud. The tragedy of Batan had to happen, as we all knew. Perhaps most of us last night did not expect the dark news today -- the end so sudden and complete. The last war communique from General Wainwright told that outnumbering and overwhelming enemy attacks had crashed through the American and Philippine Army, and the defense had collapsed.

There was no retreat save to the island fortress of Corregidor -- and army men today did not believe that many could have got across the strip of water between the southern tip of Batan and the island stronghold. It's only narrow water, but they point out that getting across would have been a desperate hazard,

almost impossible, in the face of Japanese air and artillery bombardment.

46

When General Wainwright yesterday reported the desperate situation caused by the Japanese break-through, President Roosevelt instructed him to use his own judgment about what action to take. He left the final decision up to the General. And that would indicate that Wainwright was authorized to order a surrender, to avoid further bloodshed and the death of brave men to no useful purpose. From the Axis side we have a report that the General asked the Japanese for an armistice - but of this there is no confirmation. The only thing we know tonight is that the heroes of Batan ~~xxxxxxx~~ fought to the very end of hope.

The information that accompanies the news of

the end of Batan can only increase our sadness -
and our pride. First - the smallness of the forces.
The monumental defense was made by thirty-six thousand
men, in the face of some two hundred thousand Japs.
~~That figure, thirty-six thousand, is according to~~
~~last reports. We don't know how many may have been~~
~~made prisoner.~~ ^{TP} How many were Americans and how many
were Filipinos? It was disclosed in Washington today
that in our Batan forces there was only one regiment
of United States Infantry, one regiment of regulars -
the Thirty-First. They've been stationed in the
Philippines for a long time, and ^{were} ~~was~~ the only force
of American infantry troops there when the war broke
out. ^{TP} There were other American fighting men. Last
summer two tank battalions were sent to the Phillipines
and also some mobile artillery. These forces were not
numerous but were invaluable. The artillery ~~is~~ a vital

47

factor in ^{the desperate} ~~promoting~~ a defense. And, moreover, there were men of the Air Corps, pilots and mechanics who had no air equipment with which to fight. We are told that during recent weeks our air force in Batan consisted of only two planes - fighting planes, which were rigged up to do bombing. During the past days, not even those two were left. A couple of thousand of the Air Corps men joined the infantry, and fought in the battle lines. So the number of Americans in Batan was one regiment with a maximum of several thousand others. They could not have been more than between four and five thousand.

As for the Filipinos, there were the Philippine Scouts. ~~They were~~ Part of the United States Army; reckoned as such. They numbered about ten thousand five hundred. The remainder of the troops were units

48

of the Philippine Army, the military establishment trained by General MacArthur when he was called out to the islands to do the job for the Philippine Government.

So the Batan defenders were in large part Filipinos and it is no wonder that Secretary of War Stimson today paid noble tribute to their steadfastness and loyalty to our cause.

The men of Batan were simply worn down, worn out, worn to a frazzle. That was clear today from the official War Department announcement. They were in the battleline day and night, without rest, without let-up. Japanese General Yamashita, with almost unlimited man power, poured in constant reserves, continued-attacks-in-relays. When they finally broke through, *an American* counter-attack was ordered.

49
On previous occasions the enemy had penetrated our lines and then been annihilated by American counter-attacks. But this time the troops that pushed against the enemy break-through were too badly worn out. They were simply too tired and all-in to smash the Japanese ~~in~~ wedge that was driving forward.

48
It was not only a case of the weariness of fighting day and night without relief. There was hunger, and there was disease. It was revealed today that the Batan defenders had been on short rations ever since last January, and many were sick. The presence of many Philippine refugees complicated the food problem - civilians who had to be fed. There were some twenty thousand of them. ^{TP}~~Let~~ Every effort had been made to supply the garrison.)

Many have asked, why we didn't send ships to the men of Batan? The answer is - we did. That,

50

hitherto a military secret, was revealed by the Secretary of War today. He said that as early as the middle of last January, our Minister to New Zealand had been instructed to get ships through to MacArthur, who was then in the midst of the ~~XXXXXX~~ early stages of organizing and fighting. So supply ships were pushed through, and got to Batan, but for everyone that made it, nearly two were sunk. The Secretary of War said today that because of the vessels that got through, our forces were never short of ammunition. They had plenty of artillery shells and cartridges. So, the supply ships carried munitions - and not food, apparently. Maybe they did bring food, but it was not enough.

69

In any case, this kind of relief sent to Batan could not continue. If they lost nearly two for every one that got through in the middle of January -

the increasing enemy power must have stopped them altogether. And Batan was doomed - whenever the Japanese commander saw fit to take the losses that were necessary to overwhelm so brave a band of men.

The epic of Batan has ended, but that of Corregidor remains. General Wainwright has transferred his command to the fortress of several islands at the mouth of Manila Bay. They are immensely powerful and as long as they hold out, the Japs can't use the great naval base. And they will hold out to an end as bitter as that of Batan. ^{TP} Moreover, our fight in the Philippines continues in other places - other islands. The latest this evening, is a declaration by the Philippine Government - that guerrilla warfare will go on against the Jap^s, especially on the great island of Mindanao. There will be no let-up, say the Filipinos - until their archipelago is reconquered. And reconquered

it will be! That is the grim slogan spoken in Washington, all over this country, in all the United Nations - especially in Australia, ~~where~~ General MacArthur and his staff vow their determination to lead storming forces back to Batan.

INDIA

52

The latest from India tells us that an agreement with Great Britain is expected within two days. This is stated by a number one leader of the Nationalist Party, who asserted that a plan has been worked out agreeable to both parties. ^{TP} The terms of the plan, as we get them, would seem to represent a major victory for the Nationalist Party. We are told that an Indian Government is to be formed, with native Indians holding all ministerial posts -- including defense. ^{TP} The question of the control of defense against Japan has been a stumbling block all along -- with the Indian Nationalists insisting on a native defense minister, ^{and} with London replying that the military leadership against Japan must remain in British hands. Today's account states that while the Indians are getting the Ministry of Defense, the actual direction ^{of strategy} will remain under General Sir Archibald Wavell, [^] British Commander-in-Chief in India. ^{TP} So it's a sort of compromise -- with an Indian Defense Minister to be

52

INDIA - 2

in control of such things as war production and home guard, while General Wavell, commanding the army, retains the strategic direction.

Naval Battle

SHIPS

53
It may be that right now a great and all decisive naval battle is being fought in the Bay of Bengal. London has word from Calcutta that British and Japanese fleets have been on the move for a supreme clash at sea to decide the fate of India.

Indeed, the expected naval ~~clash~~^{action} has had an ominous prelude - the sinking of two heavy British cruisers. London reports the loss of H.M.S. CORNWALL and H.M.S. DORSETSHIRE' both eight gun ships of approximately ten thousand tons. London says they were sent to the bottom by Japanese air action. The loss of life was not unduly heavy - eleven hundred survivors reported rescued. ^{TP} The London report of the sinkings does not differ ~~x~~ greatly from the Tokyo version, which tells of the destruction of one cruiser of the CORNWALL class and another of the LONDON class.

Maybe the DORSETSHIRE named in the London story, is

54
of the LONDON class mentioned by Tokyo. The Jap claim differs from the British admission in announcing the shooting down of sixty planes and the sinking of twenty-one merchant vessels and the damaging of twenty-three others. London gives no confirmation of this, but late this afternoon the All-India radio stated that several merchant vessels had been sunk, and that between four and five hundred of the survivors of these have already been landed at Indian ports.

Powerful units of the Japanese fleet are said to be based at Fort Blair in the Andaman Islands, and Rangoon in Burma. These are operating ~~out~~ in the Bay of Bengal. India says that British ~~and~~ naval and air units have gone out in search of them, and the ~~searching~~ ^{surface} ~~XXXXXXXX~~ vessels may include the giant battleship MALAYA. Rome reported recently that the MALAYA

had left Gibraltar, bound for the Indian Ocean.

It is uncertain what the Japanese objective may be. They have been bombing Ceylon, and that strategic island may be their goal. Or they may intend landings on the Indian coast in the area of Calcutta, the metropolis. However, all would depend on the major naval battle that seems to be impending, if not already in ^{full swing} ~~action~~ right now.

BURMA

25
India's ^{hour of} ~~present~~ peril is made the more emphatic by news from Burma. (It tells of no great decisive battle, nothing like an all-out Jap drive to complete the conquest of the country next door to India.) There's little word from the British forces on the western half of the defending line across Burma. The Chinese on the other side, the east, were described at last reports as ~~xxx~~ ^{TP} fighting off a series of Japanese attacks. The ominous note is not in the matter of hostilities, but in the Chinese communique stating that the Japanese are building defensive positions where they stand in eastern Burma. They appear to be making ready to conduct a limited defensive warfare against the Chinese in that area. And this is taken to mean that they intend to concentrate their big striking forces for a drive on the other half of the line - against the British in western Burma. ~~That is~~ On the India side. All of which

would make it appear that the Japs are shaping their campaign in Burma with a view to a thrust at India.

4

Today, the deputy chief of staff of the Chinese army stated that an invasion of India was - "rapidly becoming a reality", as he phrased it. This officer added that the Chinese could hold the line in Burma - "if given adequate air support." And this points to the Flying Tigers - the American volunteers in the Chinese service who have been an outstanding bright spot ^{for} ~~of~~ the Allied Nations in the war against Japan.

The Japs have air-raided the key town of Lashio with heavy bombing. Lashio is where the Burma supply line joins the main section of that famous Burma Road into China. (Mandalay, the Number One position on the supply line in the south, has been ravaged by enemy bombers in recent days - Mandalay largely destroyed, and now - Lashio, where great

{ supplies of war material for the Burma Road had been
piled up.) The news from Lashio states that the Flying
Tigers took part in the air battle against the Jap
air fleet. A still later communique relates that in
a subsequent engagement along the Burma battlefield,
American Volunteer pilots shot down ten enemy Zero
fighters, out of a fleet of twenty. The Flying Tigers
returned to their bases without a single loss after
shooting down twenty. ~~This is~~ ^{Just} the sort of thing that
they've been doing all along.

~~Today's~~ ^{Their latest} air victory is described as the first
major sky action for a week - the first challenge to
Japanese aviation predominance during that space of
time. The Japs have been having everything their own
way in the sky, no opposition. But now the Flying
Rigers are at them again. This is interpreted to mean

that the American Volunteer pilots have received ^{reinfor-}
~~ments~~ - new planes which were so badly needed.

MALTA

In the Mediterranean, there are increasing signs of a new flaming flare of war. In North Africa, Rommel's Nazi panzers are thrusting here and there - restless signs of an impending offensive. And Malta is being blasted more savagely than ever.

Today, three hundred Nazi bombers struck the island with its heaviest air raid thus far, and Malta is aptly described as the most badly bombed place in the world. Obviously, the Axis forces are trying to knock out the British island base which impedes their actions in Africa.

28

The British have sunk a big Italian cruiser, a powerful craft of ten thousand tons. A Royal Navy submarine struck the blow - a successful torpedoing that send† the enemy ship to the bottom.

RUSSIA

The battlefront in Soviet Russia has all the signs of impending action on a grand scale. The Red Army command reports fleets of newly built planes and dive bombers striking here and there all along the twelve hundred mile battlefront.

~~The Nazis~~ The Nazi tanks are camouflaged green - ~~Spring offensive tanks.~~

58 1/2 In the Crimea, the Germans launched their biggest biggest tank-assault since the Battle of Moscow. *And,* They were beaten off.

And in other areas, the Red Army is still driving - making advances. The Germans admit a Soviet break-through to the north of the key city of Kharkov. Red Army mechanized forces cracked the German line. Berlin says they were ~~eliminated~~ eliminated by a counter-attack.

All signs, in every battle theatre, point to new giant bursts of warfare - the Spring clash of nations.