

Japanese Troops Forced To Withdraw And Retrain Troops March 1942

Throughout the month of March, General Homma of the Japanese command, trained and organized the fresh troops which poured into the Philippines from all parts of the rapidly expanding empire, and made careful and elaborate plans for a fresh assault against the stubborn American-Filipino line. The U.S. forces made their own preparations and prepared to hold their defensive line.

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Gen. Homma told the Manila military tribunal that his troops were in such a bad condition in mid-February 1942, that the Fil-American troops could have walked to Manila with out encountering much resistance.

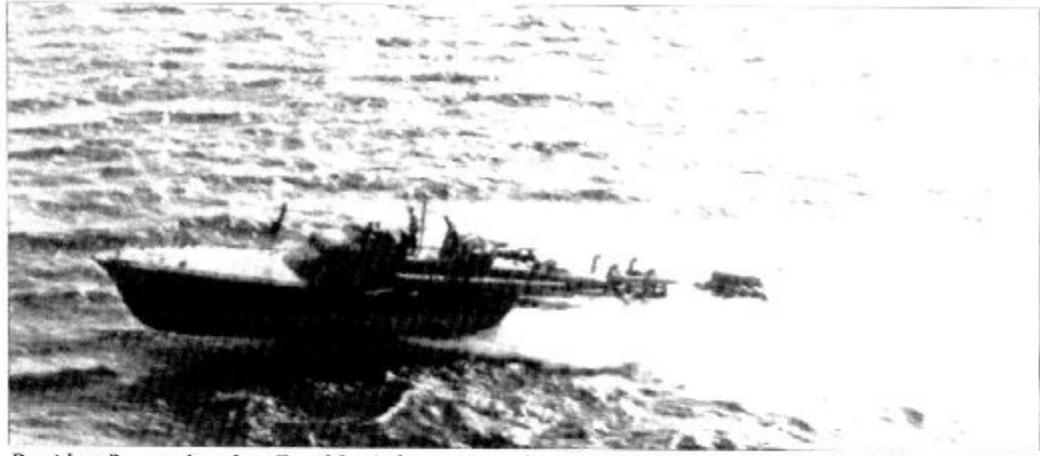


A much smaller group of Fil-American troops held up a much heavily armed Japanese force in mid-February and dug in behind their defensive position to await the next phase of battle.

Gen. MacArthur Ordered To Australia

On March 10, 1942, President Roosevelt orders Gen. MacArthur to assume other duties in Australia. He traveled by PT Boat to Mindanao and then by B-17 to Australia on March 17, 1942.

The lot of the individual soldier on Bataan was hardly affected by changes in command. The search for food was his constant pursuit, hunger and disease his enemies. Literally, he faced starvation. In the wake of starvation and want came disease. Malaria, dengue fever, beriberi, and amoebic dysentery. Hunger and disease were greater enemies than the Japanese soldiers.



President Roosevelt orders Gen. MacArthur to Australia. He departs from Corregidor by PT boat on March 12, 1942 for Mindanao, then by B-17 on March 17 for Australia.



Fil-American casualties began to rocket. Severe shortages of food and medicines contributed to the deterioration of the physical condition of the troops.

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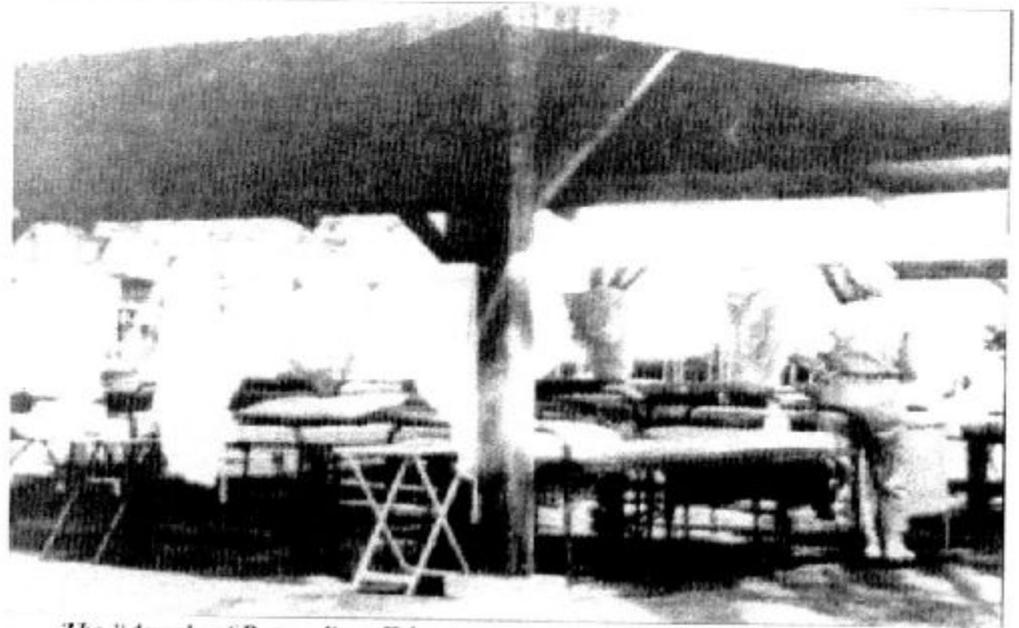
Sickness And Hunger Plagues Fil-American Troops

The two general hospitals which had been set up in the jungles of Bataan had about 7,000 patients, another 4,000 were being treated in a provisional hospital established by I Corps. There was a limited amount of quinine to medicate malaria patients and other medicines were also scarce.

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The two general hospitals on Bataan had approximately 7000 patients, another 4000 were being treated in a provisional hospital elsewhere. Gen. King's aide reported that their combat efficiency was a little below 45 percent. Hunger and disease were greater enemies than the Japanese soldiers.



The "Angels of Bataan" staff the tin-roofed, makeshift ward of Hospital No. 1.

Our Nurses & Doctors
Perform Outstanding
Services To Fil-
American Troops
Under Horrible
Conditions At Crude
Hospitals In The
Jungles of Bataan

The nurses and doctors
performed their duty above and
beyond the call of normal duty in
the jungle hospitals while bombs
and shells exploded nearby.

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Almost 20 percent of the command showed the physical effects of vitamin deficiency diseases, and over 50 percent complained of the symptoms of these diseases.



Bataan nurses. Lt. Josephine Nesbitt, Capt. M.C. Davison and Lt. Helen Hennessey outside nurses quarters tent at Hospital No. 2.

Medicines, Food, Ammunition And Equipment Were Critically Short In Supply

The lack of supplies and inability to replace battered equipment was a constant problem. Some additional supplies were brought in by submarine, chartered vessels, and aircraft from Australia. **TOO LITTLE TOO LATE!** The resulting lack of, ammunition, weapons, and medical supplies would prove to be critical in the subsequent operations.

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Medicines, food, equipment and ammunition were in very short supply and no more was to be had.



Many vessels were chartered in an attempt to supply the troops in the Philippines including the Don Isidro, Coast Farmer, Florence D. Dona, Nati and the Anhui. Only three ships successfully completed the voyage. This attempt was termed a dismal failure.



In early February 1942 a B-24 and a LB-30 (modified B-24) ferried 10,000 morphine tablets and other medical supplies to Mindanao. A later flight ferried 50,000 tablets to the Philippines. All types of smaller aircraft were used to transport these supplies to the troops on Bataan and Corregidor.



Ten submarines with badly needed supplies arrived at Corregidor and transported some nurses and other personnel back to Australia. Those involved were the Swordfish, Sargo, Permit, Seadragon, Snapper, Searaven, and the Spearfish.



Much of their equipment began to look like this.



Meanwhile, The
Japanese Imperial
Army Brings In
Fresh Troops And
Supplies From
All Over South-East
Asia

Fresh Japanese troops and more artillery pieces arrived to assist the anticipated final Japanese assault on the Fil-American lines on Bataan. Meanwhile, the defenders' health steadily eroded and with it their morale. Rations, already cut by 500 calories a day, were reduced to 1000 calories. The Bataan jungle, and the starvation diet fostered disease, and malaria took a particularly heavy toll on the men.

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Japanese troops used horses to haul supplies over rough terrain.



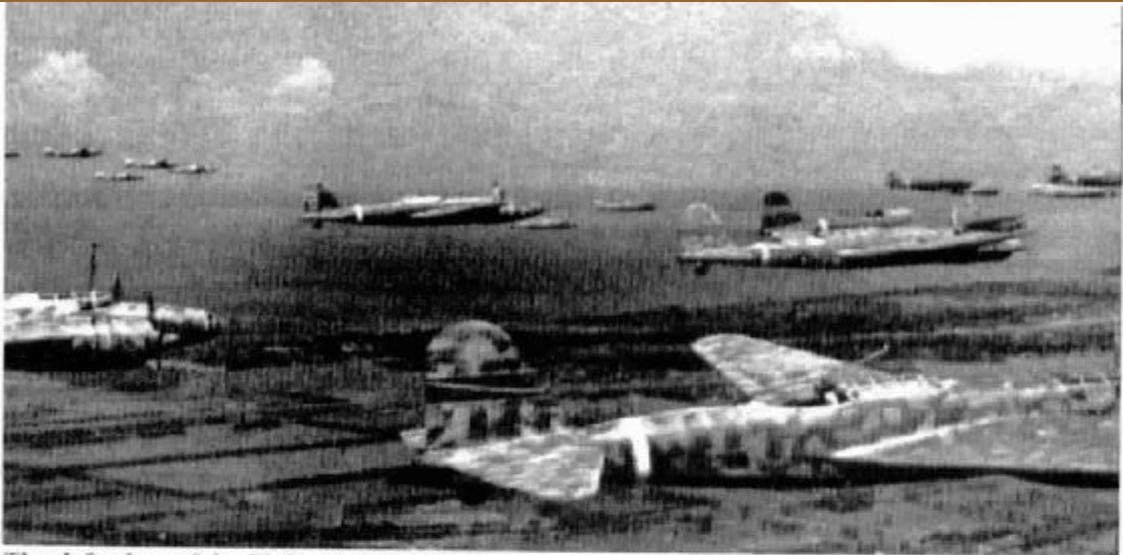
Japanese artillery increased with intensity.

Japanese Air Force Bombs Bataan More Fiercely

Japanese bombers continued their assault on the American-Filipino lines on Bataan. The planes were now coming from Clark Air Base which the Japanese had recently taken over.

More Japanese supplies and additional tanks flooded the roads to Bataan

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The defenders of the Philippine Islands were overwhelmed by Japanese superiority in air power.



The Japanese had a greater superiority in numbers of troops, tanks, and supplies.