



WORLD WAR II IN THE PHILIPPINES

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By Bataan Legacy Historical Society

Several hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Philippines, a colony of the United States from 1898 to 1946, was also bombed by the Empire of Japan. During the next four years, thousands of Filipino and American soldiers died. The entire Philippine nation was ravaged and its capital Manila, once called the Pearl of the Orient, became the second most devastated city during World War II after Warsaw, Poland. Approximately one million civilians perished. Despite so much sacrifice and devastation, on February 20, 1946, just five months after the war ended, the First Supplemental Surplus Appropriation Rescission Act was passed by U.S. Congress which deemed the service of the Filipino soldiers as inactive, making them ineligible for benefits under the G.I. Bill of Rights. To this day, these rights have not been fully-restored and a majority have died without seeing justice.

But on July 14, 2016, this mostly forgotten part of U.S. history was brought back to life when the California State Board of Education approved the inclusion of World War II in the Philippines in the revised history curriculum framework for the state. This seminal part of WWII history is now included in the Grade 11 U.S. history (Chapter 16) curriculum framework. The approval is the culmination of many years of hard work from the Filipino community with the support of different organizations across the country. In 2011, AB199 (sponsored by Ma and Yee) was passed by the California legislature which “encourages for the inclusion of the role of the Filipinos during WWII in the history/social sciences curriculum for Grades 7-12.” In 2014, the Bataan Legacy Historical Society (BLHS) started working with the Instructional Quality Commission of the California Department of Education to implement AB199. With the support of State Superintendent Tom Torlakson, BLHS was able to expand the scope of the proposed curriculum framework to include World War II in the Philippines.

Chapter 16 of the Grade 11 U.S. History will include the following: The Philippine Commonwealth; the creation of the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) comprised of Americans and a majority of Filipinos; the Battle of Bataan and the disruption of the timetable of the Imperial Japanese Army by the USAFFE Forces despite suffering from massive disease and starvation and fighting without any air support; the Bataan Death March and the thousands of casualties; the role of the Filipino and American guerrillas during the liberation; the American soldiers who were transported in hell ships to labor camps in Asia; the Battles of Leyte Gulf and the destruction of Manila.

This will be the first time that WWII in the Philippines will be taught to high school students not only in California but in the entire United States.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1897 – Japan and the United States vie for the Hawaiian Islands.

1898 - The U.S. annexes the Hawaiian Islands. After the Spanish-American War the Philippines becomes a colony of the United States. It was ceded by Spain to the U.S. for \$20M along with Puerto Rico and Guam

1914 – Japan occupies the German territories of the Carolinas, Marianas and Marshall Islands.

1924 – Adoption of War Plan Orange, the defense strategy against Japan.

1931 - Japan occupies Manchuria

1934 - Tydings-McDuffie Act – U.S. Congress provides for Philippine independence in 1946. It limits immigration of Filipinos into the U.S. to 50 per year and reclassifies Filipinos living in the U.S. as aliens.

1935 - General Douglas MacArthur becomes U.S. Military Advisor of the Philippine Commonwealth Government.

1937 - Second Sino-Japanese War. Japan occupies Nanking, Shanghai; Sinking of US Gunboat Panay in Yangtze River.

1939 – Germany invades Poland. Beginning of World War II in Europe. Development of Rainbow Plans.

1940

August- Japan establishes military bases in French IndoChina

September – Tri Partite Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan

November—Plan Dog Memo, basis for Europe First Policy created by Admiral Harold Stark, Chief of Naval Operations

1941

July 22 - Japan occupies the rest of French Indochina. US declares total embargo of scrap iron and oil and freezes Japanese assets in the U.S. and the Philippines.

July 26 - President Franklin Roosevelt signs a military order federalizing all organized military units in the Philippines into the service of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (**USAFFE**).

July 30 - American gunboat Tutuila is bombed by Japanese in Chungking, China

September - Initial mobilization of Filipino troops

November 27 - Heightened State of Alert in the Philippines after breakdown of negotiations between Japan and the United States

December 7 in Hawaii/December 8 in Philippines - Bombing of Pearl Harbor and the Philippines. Clark and Iba Air Bases are bombed destroying majority of the planes of the Far East Air Force.

December 10 - Sangley Point Naval Base is bombed destroying majority of naval facilities. First landing of Japanese troops in northern Luzon

December 13 - No air support except for a few fighters for reconnaissance. Withdrawal of Naval Force except for submarines.

December 22 - Landing of General Homma's 14th Army troops in Lingayen. First encounter with the Imperial Japanese Army by the 26th Cavalry and 71st Division.

December 24 - USAFFE troops retreat to Bataan (Reverted to War Plan Orange 3).

December 26 - Philippine capital of Manila is declared an Open City; Commander in Chief of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, Thomas Hart, leaves Manila in accordance with Rainbow Plan 5.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1942

January – USAFFE troops are placed on half rations. USAFFE troops hold the main line of resistance. Allied civilians interned in Manila, Baguio and Los Baños.

February – Singapore falls. Quinine is no longer distributed to the soldiers of Bataan. Japan’s General Homma requests for troop reinforcements.

March 12 - General Douglas MacArthur leaves the Philippines. The troops are placed on quarter rations.

April 3 to 8 – There are no longer any reserve troops. Japan launches massive air and artillery bombardment. Newly arrived troops of the Imperial Japanese Forces decimate the sick and emaciated USAFFE troops on Mt. Samat in the Bataan Peninsula.

April 9 - General Edward King, Jr. surrenders the 75,000 troops of Bataan.

April 9 to end of April - Bataan Death March; Approximately 10,000 Filipinos & 650 Americans perish during the march of approximately 60 miles. Another 20,000 troops, mostly Filipinos, die inside the prison camp at Camp O’Donnell.

May 6 – General Jonathan Wainwright surrenders Corregidor and the rest of the Philippines

Mid 1942—Growth of Guerrilla Groups (beginning last week of 1941)

1943

October 14—Inauguration of the Second Philippine Republic under Japanese control.

1944

April—Operational & Logistical plans for penetration of Philippines by American Intelligence Bureau

June - Guerrillas raid Muntinglupa POW camp

October – Leyte Landing (Arrival of Allied Troops led by the U.S.) Battle of Leyte Gulf, largest naval battle in history.

December - Beginning of “Zonas”. Filipino men suspected of collaborating with the Americans are rounded up and executed.

1945

January – Massacre of American military Prisoners of War in Palawan

February to March – Battle of Manila; Massacre of Manila Civilians by the Imperial Japanese Army & Navy; 100,000 Civilians Perish in Manila.

September 2 –Terms of Japan’s Surrender signed aboard the USS Missouri.

By The End of the War – **Approximately 1 Million Civilians Perish in the Philippines.**

Spanish American War to the Philippine Commonwealth

1898 to 1935



Santo Tomas University

The Philippines became a colony of the United States in 1898 after the Spanish-American War when it was ceded with Guam and Puerto Rico for \$20 million under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Its capital Manila was already a bustling city enriched by the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade with grand churches and prestigious educational institutions such as the University of Santo Tomas established in 1611.



San Agustin Church, Manila

After the departure of the Spanish, the Filipinos continued their fight for independence. As a large segment of the U.S. troops were volunteers, U.S. Congress authorized the enlistment of approximately 6,000 Filipinos into what became the Philippine Scouts which was officially established on October 8, 1901, by the U.S. Army (Philippine Department General Order 310) to overcome the Filipino resistance and to restore peace in the archipelago. It consisted of trained Filipino soldiers under the command of American officers. It was inducted into the Regular U.S. Army's Philippine Division between 1920 to 1923 and eventually Filipino officers who graduated from U.S. Military Schools were given some command.



Philippine National Assembly, 1907

The Philippines was initially governed by a military governor until 1901, when a Civil Governor ruled concurrently. In 1902, William Howard Taft governed solely as Civil Governor. A Philippine legislature was established from 1907 to 1935 under an American Civil Governor. On March 24, 1934, the U.S. Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act which provided for the Philippines' eventual independence after a ten-year transition period. It also limited the immigration of Filipinos to the U.S. to 50 per year and reclassified Filipino nationals already living in the U.S. as aliens.



President Manuel Quezon, Inauguration of the Philippine Commonwealth

On November 15, 1935, the Philippine Commonwealth was inaugurated with its first President Manuel L. Quezon, who initiated the creation of the Office of the Military Advisor to the Commonwealth Government under General Douglas MacArthur assisted by Major Dwight Eisenhower and Major James Ord. Their recommendations to create an army by the time of its independence in 1946 were adopted by the Philippine National Assembly as the National Defense Act of 1935.



Gen. Douglas MacArthur

The Winds of War

1931 to 1941

In 1931 Japan invaded Manchuria, later renamed Manchukuo. When the League of Nations protested the occupation, Japan resigned and incorporated Jehol into Manchukuo in 1933. Japan signed an anti-Comintern pact with Germany in 1936. In 1937 the second Sino-Japanese war began and ended with the occupation of Shanghai and the rape of Nanking in which approximately 300,000 civilians perished. On December 12, 1937, a Japanese aircraft sank a U.S. gunboat "Panay" stationed in the Yangtze River.



Japanese flag in Manchuria

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II in Europe started.



Germany invades Poland.

A series of war scenarios in the Atlantic and the Pacific called the Rainbow Plans was developed by the U.S. Joint Army and Navy Board. War Plan Orange, the defense strategy against Japan which was first adopted in 1924, was incorporated in the plan and Phase I called for a sacrificial delaying action on the



Tripartite Pact

mouth of Manila Bay. In January 1940, the U.S. extended the lend lease program to China and in August, Japan established military bases in French Indochina and announced the formation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere. The U.S. instituted a series of economic sanctions. In September the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan was ratified. By November, Plan Dog Memorandum was drafted by U.S. Naval Operations and became the basis for the Europe First Strategy.



Gen. George Marshall, U.S. Chief of Staff

In January 1941, the American British Dutch Conversations took place resulting in Rainbow Plan 5, which stated that the Navy was to defend the coastal frontier of the Philippines so long as that defense continues. In May, Army dependents in the Philippines were sent back to the U.S. (Navy dependents had gone back in 1940).

On July 22 Japan occupied the rest of Indochina. The U.S. declared total embargo of scrap iron and oil and froze Japanese assets in the U.S. and the Philippines.



Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo

United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE)

On July 26, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a military order from the war department federalizing all organized units in the Philippines into the service of the U.S. Army



Gen. MacArthur & Staff

Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) headed by General MacArthur who believed that Japan will not attack until April 1942. He revised War Plan Orange 3 so that the USAFFE troops would meet the enemy on the beaches of Luzon instead of defending Manila Bay from the Bataan peninsula. Resources bound for Bataan were redistributed accordingly.



41st Infantry Regiment, QM

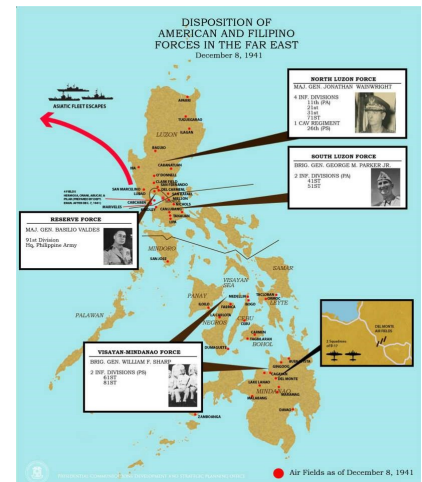
USAFFE also included the Far East Air Force, the Provisional Tank Group and some U.S. Navy Units and the 4th Marine Regiment were attached to it.



USAFFE Troops in training

The USAFFE forces eventually consisted of 119,000 Filipinos, 19,000 Americans and 12,000 Philippine Scouts. The newly-recruited Filipino troops of USAFFE, however, were not mobilized until September 1941. There were few officers available. Many of the recruits never fired a shot before the war. They were given khaki shorts, canvas shoes and World War I guns and

artillery, including ammunitions, half of which were duds.



During mid November while negotiations were taking place in Washington, D.C., between Secretary of State Cordell Hull and the Japanese ambassador, the Commanders of the IJA's 11th Air Fleet, 14th Army and 5th Air Group met at Iwakuni Naval Air Base in Japan to prepare plans for coordination of Army and Navy Air units in the field operations. On November 24 the U.S. Asiatic Fleet started moving to the Netherland Dutch Indies (Malay barrier). On November 25, IJA's 16th Division left Osaka and a convoy of Japanese ships south of Formosa departed. Japanese air fleet heading for Pearl Harbor departed Hotokappu Bay in the Kurile Chain.



Imperial Japanese Navy before Pearl Harbor

A heightened state of alert existed on November 27. On December 6, a telegram from Tokyo to the Japanese Consulate in Washington, DC was encrypted stating that the Japanese government would not accept U.S. demands.

Invasion of the Philippines

December 8, 1941 to April 8, 1942

Hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japan attacked the Philippines on the morning of December 8, 1941, in Baguio and Davao. Around noon time, Iba Air Base and Clark Air Base were bombed. More than half of the planes of the Far East Air Force (FEAF) were destroyed. Nichols Air field was destroyed on December 9 and the men of the FEAF were transferred to infantry units.

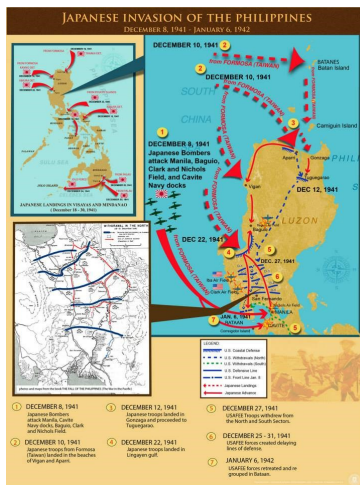


Bombed planes at Clark Air Base

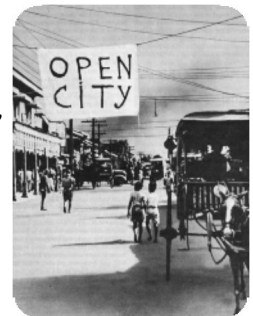
The first Japanese infantries landed in northern Luzon on December 10. Sangley Naval Base in Cavite was destroyed. By December 13, there was no longer any air support except for a few reconnaissance planes. By December 17, Japan's 16th Division landed in Legaspi and by December 22, General Masaharu Homma landed with his 14th Army in Lingayen. It was the first encounter with the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) by USAFFE's 26th cavalry and the 71st Division. By December 24, IJA's 16th division reached Lamon Bay, 138 kilometers from Manila.



General Masaharu Homma landing in Lingayen



General MacArthur reverted to War Plan Orange and the USAFFE troops were immediately ordered to retreat to Bataan. General MacArthur, President Quezon and U.S. Resident Commissioner Francis Sayre were evacuated to the island of Corregidor off the coast of Bataan. Admiral Thomas Hart, Commander in Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, learned of the retreat only through a USAFFE dispatch. On December 26 Manila was declared an open city and Admiral Hart left the Philippines for the Malay Reef in accordance with Rainbow Plan



Manila, open city 5.



On January 2, the Imperial Japanese Army entered Manila. American and Allied civilians were ordered to assemble at certain locations for internment in several areas mainly in Santo Tomas University, Los Baños, Baguio and later in Bilibid. A total of 7,800 Allied civilians were interned: 6,000 Americans, 1,500 British, 150 Dutch and 150 other nationalities.

On January 5 USAFFE troops were put in half rations. But this did not deter them from holding the line and inflicting heavy losses on the IJA's 65th Brigade in the Battle of Mabatang (January 11-12) and the Battle of Abucay (January 17 to 22). General MacArthur sent a message to the troops in Bataan that "Thousands of troops and hundreds of planes are being dispatched." But no help ever came.





USAFFE Troops in Bataan

By February, Singapore had fallen. Quinine, the cure for malaria, was no longer distributed to the USAFFE soldiers. Because of heavy Japanese casualties, General Homma was forced to ask for troop reinforcements.

By March Indonesia fell to Japan. The USAFFE troops were placed on quarter rations.

Combat efficiency was down to 25 per cent. Five hundred soldiers a day were afflicted with malaria. General MacArthur was ordered to leave the Philippines on March 12. On March 30 Hospital #1 was bombed in Bataan.



Hospital #1 in Bataan

By the beginning of April, fresh Japanese reinforcements arrived from Formosa and Korea. The combat efficiency of the USAFFE troops was close to zero. On April 3, the birthdate of Japan's Emperor Jimmu, a massive Japanese air and artillery bombardment began on Mt. Samat. By April 7, only two days' worth of quarter rations remained. The lines were breached. Little did the men know that their fate had already been sealed when Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt met in Washington, DC (Arcadia Conference) between December 22, 1941, and January 14, 1942, and agreed to save Europe first.



President Roosevelt & Prime Minister Churchill



Nurses rescued from Santo Tomas University

Angels of Bataan and Corregidor

They were called the Angels of Bataan and Corregidor - American and Filipino nurses who fought just as hard as the soldiers in battle. Despite the lack of supplies and medicine and working under the direst conditions including constant bombings, the American and Filipino nurses brought comfort to the sick, the wounded and the dying in the jungles of Bataan. But with the fall of Bataan, 72 Army, 1 Navy and 26 Filipino nurses were forced to evacuate to Corregidor along with other Hospital staff between April 8 and April 9. Nurses of Hospital#2 were caught behind exploding ordnance but managed to take the last boat for Corregidor on April 9.

After the fall of Corregidor on May 6, 1942, they were incarcerated for almost 3 years in Los Baños, Bilibid and Santo Tomas University.

BATAAN DEATH MARCH and PRISONERS OF WAR

On April 8, there were no longer any reserve troops. The last counterattack led by General Clifford Bluemel to hold the line in Alangan River had failed. Hospital Number 2 was bombed and 73 American and 26 Filipino nurses as well as other medical personnel were forced to evacuate to Corregidor.



Gen. King surrendering to Col. Motoo Nakayama

On April 9, 1942, General Edward King, commanding officer of the troops in Bataan (Luzon Force), was forced to surrender 75,000 troops consisting of 63,000 Filipinos and 12,000 Americans to avoid further bloodshed. By the time of the surrender most of the men were suffering from massive disease and starvation.



They were forced to march some 60 miles in searing tropical heat with no provisions for food, water, shelter or medicine. In Pantangan River an estimated 300 soldiers of the 1st, 11th, 71st and 91st Divisions were massacred after their surrender.



Bataan Death March

Those who could no longer go on were beaten, bayoneted or even left to die. There were some who were even beheaded. And those civilians who tried to help were dealt with in the same manner. This became known as the Bataan Death March.

Approximately 10,000 Filipino and 650 American troops died during the march. Once inside their prison camp at Camp O'Donnell, another 20,000 died consisting mainly of Filipinos.



Dead Filipino soldiers

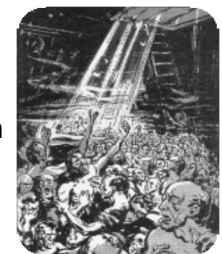


General Wainwright

Lt. General Jonathan Wainwright, Commanding Officer of the United States Forces in the Philippines (USFIP), surrendered on the island of Corregidor on May 6, 1942 to the Imperial Japanese Army.

Most but not all of the Filipino troops were released conditionally starting in June, 1942. Some of them were used as slave laborers in mines in the Philippines. Many of those released joined the guerrilla groups.

The American prisoners were transferred to other camps in the Philippines around the same time. Many of them were eventually shipped to Formosa, Japan, Korea and China to do hard labor. They were transported in the holds of unmarked merchant ships which carried supplies and weapons. Conditions were so dismal that they were called "Hell Ships". Thousands died when their ships were bombed by friendly fire. Upon reaching their destination many more died doing hard labor.



Hell Ship

The Long Road to Freedom 1942 to 1945

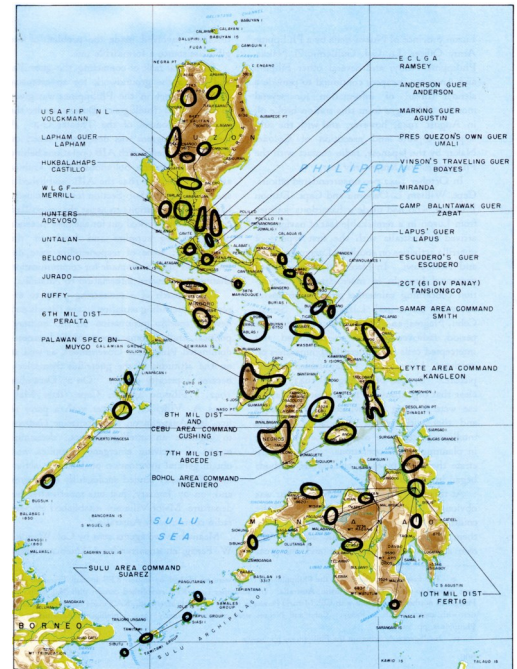
Guerrilla Movements

Guerrilla groups were initially formed even before the fall of Bataan. The Free Philippines, established during the last weeks of 1941, was formed by a group of young professionals from Manila to serve as a counter-propaganda unit. In January 1942, 300 students of the Philippine Military Academy and ROTC organized themselves



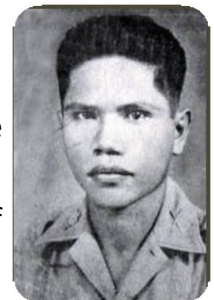
Hunters Guerrillas

to protect the civilians and to cooperate with USAFFE forces in Bataan. They were later known as the Hunters Guerrillas. With the Fall of Bataan and Corregidor, Filipino and American soldiers who escaped from Bataan headed for the hills where they organized



and/or joined guerrilla forces which became more numerous after the conditional release of many Filipino soldiers from Camp O'Donnell. The first organized units recognized by the General Headquarters (GHQ), U.S. Army Forces Pacific, Military Intelligence Section were the ones from the Visayas and Mindanao. Colonel Wendell Fertig of the 10th Military District (Mindanao) established control with General Headquarters immediately after the surrender in 1942. There were even Chinese citizens who formed guerrilla groups (Wha Chi, Pekek, Kang Chu).

The guerrilla groups led by Filipinos and Americans organized massive and detailed reconnaissance information which were transmitted to GHQ. As early as April 1943, an operational and logistical plan for the penetration of the Philippines by the American Intelligence Bureau Parties was issued based on these reconnaissance reports. The Guerrilla groups also sabotaged Japanese installations, laying the groundwork for the eventual liberation of the Philippines. In June 1944, guerrillas led by the Hunters ROTC raided the Japanese prison camp of Muntinglupa (New Bilibid). During the rescue of American POWs in Cabanatuan (January 30, 1945) and Allied civilian prisoners in Los Baños (February 23, 1945), Filipino guerrillas under the leadership of Captain Juan Pajota and Lt. Col. Gustavo Ingles were instrumental in enabling the successful rescue. By the formal end of the war on September 2, 1945, nearly 260,000 men and women served in guerrilla organizations.



Juan Pajota

Liberation 1944 TO 1945

Leyte Landing

The Leyte Landing actually began not in Leyte but on the islands of Suluan (Eastern Samar) and Sinagat (formerly part of Surigao del Norte) when troops from the 6th Rangers performed minesweeping operations and landed around 8:05 on October 17, 1944 to secure the landing area. It was not until 13:30 on October 20, 1944, that General MacArthur made his dramatic entrance on the shores of Sogod Bay in Leyte. Approximately 202,500 ground troops of the U.S. 6th Army (2 Corps of 2 Divisions Each) led by Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger were transported by the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet commandeered by Vice-Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid.



Leyte Landing



Battle of Leyte Gulf

Battles of Leyte Gulf

The biggest naval battle in U.S. history was about to happen after the great landing in Leyte. Thus on October 23, 1944, began the Battles of Leyte Gulf. This was a series of four battles in Sibuyan Sea, Surigao Strait, Samar and Cape Engaño. It was an all-out battle on both sides, especially for the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), which committed nearly all of its forces, depleting its reserves of fuel oil. The giant strength of the Allied Forces' 800 ships dwarfed the IJN's 67 ships. The Allied Forces' 3rd Fleet was commandeered by Admiral William Halsey who reported to Admiral Chester Nimitz while the Vice-Admiral Kinkaid of the 7th Fleet reported to General Douglas MacArthur.

On October 25 the Japanese aircraft carrier Zuikaku, which took part in the bombing of Pearl Harbor sank at 14:14 taking the lives of Rear Admiral Kaizuka Takeo and 842 of the ship's crew. This decisive battles destroyed the Imperial Japanese Navy enabling the Allied Forces to continue the liberation of the Philippines and eventually win the war.



Sinking of the Zuikaku

First Filipino Infantry Regiment and Second Filipino Infantry Battalion



Vice President Osmena

On February 19, 1942, the Secretary of War announced the formation of a Filipino battalion at Camp San Luis Obispo, California. The First Filipino Infantry Regiment was inducted on July 13, 1942 in Salinas, California, and the Second Filipino Infantry Regiment was inducted on October 22, 1942, in Fort Ord, CA. Both groups were sent to Oro Bay, New Guinea in 1944.

The First Filipino Infantry Regiment landed in Leyte in the Philippines in February 1945. Soldiers from the Second Filipino Infantry Regiment (became the Second Filipino Infantry Battalion) were used to form the 5217th (later 1st) Reconnaissance Battalion, a commando-trained formation which was created to assist the burgeoning guerilla movement, the Alamo Scouts (6th Army Special Reconnaissance), which took part in 67 missions in the Philippines most notably in the liberation of American POWs in Cabanatuan and the 441st Counter Intelligence Corps.



Alamo Scouts Ileta Group

Other Allied Forces during the Liberation

Australia



Commander John Collins,
HMAS Australia

Four Australian warships and the assault transports Kanimbla, Manoora and Westralia along with a number of smaller warships and support ships took part in the Leyte Landing on October 20, 1944. The U.S. Seventh Fleet included the Task Force 74 headed by Commander John Collins with his flagship HMAS Australia. They took part in the Battles of Leyte Gulf, in which Commander Collins was badly wounded in a kamikaze attack on October 21, 1944, while the Shropshire and the Arunta were in the Battle of Surigao Strait on October 25, 1944. The Australian naval force took part in the Battle of Lingayen Gulf in January 1945, in which HMAS Australia was struck by five Kamikazes that killed 44 of her crew and forced her to withdraw for major repairs. The RAAF's No. 3 Airfield Construction Squadron and No. 1 Wireless Unit also landed in the Philippines and supported liberation operations.

Mexico

The 201st Fighter Squadron (Escuadrón Aéreo de Pelea 201) was a Mexican fighter squadron. It was part of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force that aided the Allied war effort during World War II. The squadron was known by the nickname Aguilas Aztecas or "Aztec Eagles". The squadron was attached to the 58th Fighter Group of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) during the liberation of Luzon in the summer of 1945.



Mexican aviators

The Human Casualties

1944 to 1945

Zonas

After the Allied Forces started bombing airfields in the Philippines around September 1944, the Imperial Japanese Army started a systematic extermination of prisoners and civilians. On December 14, 1944, as warning sirens sounded off in the Allied POW camp in Palawan, the American prisoners were ordered into the bomb shelters. The Japanese guards doused off the entrances with gasoline and proceeded to burn the prisoners. Out of 159 prisoners, only 11 survived.



Allied POWs killed in Palawan



Civilians executed in Lipa, Batangas

In every small town, a “Zona” took place. Men or women were rounded off and taken to a gathering place often times a church. A local person wearing a “bayong” (woven basket) to cover his or her face, except for the eyes, would point at suspected ex-USAFFE soldiers or anyone suspected of having any sympathy for the United States. The Japanese soldiers would then proceed to execute them. In some towns the selection was more complete. In February, 1945, 2,298 civilians were executed in Lipa, Batangas by bayonets, gunfire, burial in wells or burning. Following the successful rescue of 2,147 Allied civilian prisoners in Los Baños on February 23, 1945, the Imperial Japanese Army retaliated by slaughtering 1,500 civilians.

Battle of Manila

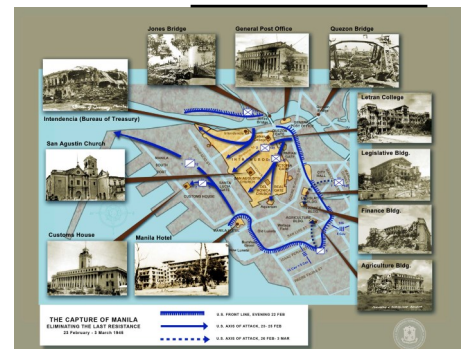
In the Battle of Manila between February 3 and March 3, 1945, many civilians took refuge in convents and churches. This did not deter the Japanese soldiers from raping, killing and burning them. Fortunately, Allied civilian prisoners who were incarcerated since the Fall of Manila in Santo Tomas, Baguio, Bilibid, Los Baños and other outlying areas were liberated starting on February 3, 1945. But an estimated 100,000 civilians perished in Manila from the systematic extermination and shelling.



Destruction of Manila



Rescue of Allied civilian prisoners in Santo Tomas University



By the end of the war, an estimated 1 million civilians had perished in the Philippines. Manila became the second most devastated city during the war, after Warsaw, Poland.



Human casualties of war

Legacy of World War II in the Philippines

The Philippines gained its independence from the United States on July 4, 1946. But to this day it remains intertwined with the United States. There are an estimated 3.4 million (2010 census) Filipino Americans living in the United States today, the second largest population of Asian Americans. But there is a lack of information about the accomplishments of the Filipinos in the history curriculum as well as in textbooks.

All that is about to change. With the recent adoption by the California State Board of Education of WWII in the Philippines in the U.S. history curriculum framework for Grade 11, students in California and across the United States will learn of the great sacrifices that were made by the Filipinos and Americans to bring the freedom that they are now enjoying today. Future generations of Filipino Americans can instill the values and pride of their ancestors' legacy.

California's new history curriculum framework can become the model for teaching this seminal point of WWII history in the U.S. and even in the Philippines and Japan.



Manila American Cemetery

We have a moral and sacred obligation to tell these stories of immense sacrifice so that the world can learn the steep price of freedom. Only in learning the unvarnished facts can we break the vicious cycle of war.



This brochure is made possible by a grant from the Joseph & Mercedes McMicking Foundation in memory of Lt. Alfred McMicking of the 51st Division, U.S. Army Forces in the Far East, who survived the Bataan Death March but was executed by the Imperial Japanese Army in January 1945.

Photos and maps are from the National Archives, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Signal Corps, National Museum of Naval Aviation, Republic of the Philippines Presidential Library & Museum, Memorare Manila 1945, John Tewell Collection, WWII Database, John Ream, Jerry Adevosio, Guillermo Garcia, Paul Whitman , James Litton and Life Magazine.

References are posted on the Bataan Legacy website at <http://www.bataanlegacy.org/referenceslinks.html>

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