

TAGUMPAY: Ang Imahe ng mga Beterano at Bayaning Pilipino noong Digmaang Pasipiko

Script na isinulat ni ni
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Mapapanood sa: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcEXplOTLrc>

Unang ipinalabas sa “*Images of Valor and Victory: A Conference on World War II and Filipino Heroism.*” Isinagawa ng Philippine Historical Association sa pakikipagtulungan ng Kagawaran ng Tanggulang Pambansa, Philippine Veterans Affairs Office at ng Multi-Agency Task Force for the 2010 Observance of Araw ng Kagitingan and Philippine Veterans Week. Ginanap noong 5 Marso 2010 sa National Defense College of the Philippines Auditorium, Kampo Hen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Lungsod Quezon.

SA MATAGAL NA PANAHON NAGING PANANAW NG MGA AKLAT AT BIDYO ANG IMAHE NG KASAWIAN AT KABIGUAN NG MGA PILIPINO NOONG IKALAWANG DIGMAANG PANDAIGDIG. NA ANG TANGING NAGWASAK SA ATING BAYAN AY ANG MGA HAPONES, NA ANG TUNAY NA NAGPALAYA SA MGA PILIPINO AY ANG MGA AMERIKANO. NGUNIT KUNG TITINGNAN ANG KASAYSAYAN SA ATING SARILING PANANAW MAKIKITA ANG TUNAY NA KAGITINGAN AT TAGUMPAY, SA KABILA NG SAKRIPISYO, PAGKAWASAK AT KAMATAYAN, NG BAYANING PILIPINO NOONG DIGMAANG PASIPIKO (1941-1945)

Ang Pilipinas sa pagpasok ng Dekada 1940:
Larawan ng katahimikan sa kabila ng panganib.

Binubuo ang nasyon at estadong Pilipino sa ilalim ng mga Amerikano sa pamamagitan ng sampung taong Komonwelt ng Pilipinas na nagsimula noong 1935. Si Manuel Luis Quezon ang pangulo.

Habang sa ibang mga bansa sa daigdig, ang banta ng diktadura at pasismo ay umiiral. Sa Europa, namayani sina Adolf Hitler ng Alemanya at Benito Mussolini ng Italya, habang ang mga Hapones naman ay nasakop na ang Tsina, at naisagawa ang tinaguriang “Rape of Nanking.”

Upang tugunan ang bantang ito, inilabas ang pinakaunang “Commonwealth Act,” na tinawag na Philippines Defense Act. Tinawagan ang mga mamamayan na magsanay upang ipagtaggool ang bayan sa mga bantang ito. Sa mga paaralan, ipinatupad ang ROTC.

Sa mga pagsasanay na ito, upang makatipid, gumamit ng mga lumang riple mula pa noong Unang Digmaang Pandaigdig, mga unipormeng *surplus* ng mga Amerikano (kaya naging malalaki sa atin), at *helmet* na gawa sa niyog.

Sa kabila ng mga balakid na ito, ayon sa tagapayo ni Pang. Quezon, ang dating pinuno ng Hukbong Katihang Amerikano na si Hen. Douglas MacArthur, magiging handa ang Pilipinas upang ipagtanggol ang kanilang bansa pagdating ng Abril 1942.

Samantala, bilang paghahanda sa kanilang mithiing “Asya Para sa Mga Asyano,” naging malawakan ang pagtiktik ng mga Hapones sa Pilipinas. Ang mga Hapones kasi sa mga panahong ito ay namamayani sa mga mahahalagang industriya sa bansa bilang mga hardinero, barbero, tindero, potograpo, atbp.

7 DISYEMBRE 1941, 7:55 NU

Sorpresang sinalakay ng Hukbong Hapones ang base militar ng hukbong dagat ng Estados Unidos sa Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Madaling araw ng 8 Disyembre sa Pilipinas.

Nang mabalitaan ang pagsalakay, ayon kay William Manchester, hindi naging mapagpasya ang mga kilos ni MacArthur sa mga mahahalagang unang oras na iyon, na tulad ng iba, ay lubhang nasorpresa.

Buong umaga na lumipad ang mga modernong eroplanong Amerikano sa Clarkfield, Pampanga bilang paghahanda sa pag-atake ng mga Hapones. Nang bumaba sila upang muling magkarga ng gasolina, sumalakay ang mga Hapones bandang tanghali at nawasak ang lahat ng kanilang mga eroplano.

10 DISYEMBRE 1941

Binomba ang Maynila.

Sa kabila ng kakulangan sa gamit at pagsasanay, at sa pag-aakalang ang digmaan ay isang “picnic,” maraming Pilipino ang nagpatala upang labanan ang mga Hapones at ipagtanggol ang bayan.

Dahil na rin sa kanilang mga produkto at tangkad, minaliit ng mga Pilipino ang mga Hapones at inakalang dalawang linggo lamang magtatagal ang digmaan.

22 DISYEMBRE 1941

12 bala bawat tao ang ibinigay sa mga sundalong ha harap sa pwersang Hapones sa Lingayen, Pangasinan. Sa pagdating ng mas malaking pwersang Hapones, kinailangang umurong ng mga sundalong Pilipino.

Lumikas sina Quezon, MacArthur at ang Pamahalaang Komonwelt patungo sa isla ng Corregidor, Cavite. Upang hindi mawasak ng pagbomba ng mga Hapones ang Maynila, idineklara ito ni MacArthur na “Open City” noong 26 Disyembre. Binomba pa rin ito ng mga Hapones.

Nang makita ang lakas ng pwersang Hapones, ipinatupad ni MacArthur ang *War Plan Orange 3* noong Enero 1942. Dito, ang kalat-kalat ng mga pwersang Pilipino-Amerikano sa Luzon ay tinipon upang ipagtanggol ang iisang lugar, ang tangway ng Bataan at ang kalapit na isla ng Corregidor, habang naghihintay ng suportang pagkain, gamot at karagdagang pwersa mula sa pamahalaan ng Estados Unidos.

Sa kabila ng masigasig na pakikipaglaban ng mga Hapones upang makuha ang Bataan, matagumpay itong ipinagtanggol ng mga Pilipino:

LAYAC JUNCTION, 2-6 Enero 1942

ORION-BAGAC LINE

BATTLE OF THE POINTS, 19 Enero – 16 Pebrero 1942

BATTLE OF THE POCKETS, 28 Enero – 17 Pebrero 1942

Maging ang mga Igorot, at ang iba pang mga katutubo, ay sumama sa laban.

Naging mataas ang moral ng mga kawal Pilipino-Amerikano, na umasa sa paparating na suportang Amerikano. Ang “Voice of Freedom” mula sa Corregidor ang naging tinig ng tagumpay ng mga tagapagtanggol ng Bataan.

Upang sirain ang moral ng mga tagapagtanggol ng Bataan, nagpakalat ng mga propaganda ang mga Hapones upang pasabikin sila na umuwi na lamang at iwan na ang labanan.

Mga larawan ng mga magagandang dilag at ng kanilang mga pamilya ang ipinakita ng mga Hapones.

Nilabanan ito ng mga tagapagtanggol at inalala ang babaeng ginahasa at pinatay ng mga Hapones, “Remember Erlinda”

9 PEBRERO 1942

Matapos ang matinding pagkabigo na gapiin ang Bataan at dahil sa mataas na bilang ng mga namamatay na kawal, umatras ang mga Hapones sa ilalim ni Hen. Masaharu Homma habang naghihintay ng panibagong suporta mula sa Hapon.

Samantala, hawak na ng Hapones ang halos buong Timog Silangang Asya

...MALIBAN SA BATAAN AT CORREGIDOR.

Ayon kay Winston Churchill, Punong Ministro ng Gran Britanya, ang kawal Pilipino ay THE BEST WARRIOR IN THE WORLD.

Ngunit lingid sa kaalaman ng mga tagapagtanggol ng Bataan, nagpasya na pala si Pang. Franklin Delano Roosevelt na hindi kayang magpokus sa dalawang teatro ng digmaan (sa Atlantiko at Pasipiko) ang mga Amerikano.

Kaya ipinatupad ang *War Plan Rainbow 5*, na nagtakda na kailangang unahing magapi ang pinakamasamang kalaban. Sa makatuwid, si Adolf Hitler muna, “Europe First.”

Lahat ng mga tulong-suporta para sa mga tagapagtanggol ng Bataan ay ipinadala na lamang upang tulungan ang mga Europeo at ang mga Briton upang magapi ang Alemanya at Italya.

Sinabi ni Quezon kay MacArthur:

“How typically American to anguish over the fate of a distant cousin (Britain) while a daughter (the Philippines) is being raped in the back room.”

Lumisan si Quezon sa Corregidor upang sa Estados Unidos ay patuloy na manungkulan bilang Pangulo ng Komonwelt.

Si MacArthur ay lumisan ng Pilipinas at nangakong, “I SHALL RETURN.”

ABRIL 1942

Nagpanibagong-lakas ang mga Hapones at muling nilusob ang Bataan. Dahil sa gutom at sakit, madaling nagapi ang tagapagtanggol.

3 ABRIL 1942: Nakuha ang Bundok Samat.

9 ABRIL 1942

Narinig ang brodkast ng “Voice of Freedom” na binasa ni Norman Reyes at sinulat ni Salvador P. Lopez:

“Bataan has fallen, but the spirit that made it stands—a beacon to all the liberty-loving peoples of the world cannot fail.”

Kung hindi raw sumuko ang mga pinunong Amerikano, lalaban ang mga Pilipino hanggang kamatayan.

Tinipon ang mga natitirang 60-70 libong mga kawal Pilipino, at 11,000 mga Amerikano at sa kabila ng pangakong magandang pagtrato, ay pinalakad ng 120 km. mula Mariveles, Bataan patungong San Fernando, Pampanga; isinakay sa masisikip at mababahong tren patungong Capas Tarlac; at muling pinalakad ng 13 km. patungong Kampo O’Donnell.

Ito ang tinawag na “Death March.”

Sa kabila ng walang awang pagpatay ng mga Hapones sa mga sundalong tumatakas o nagpapabagal sa prusisyon, ang mga bayaning sibilyan ay patagong nagpamigay ng tubig, pagkain, at nagpatakas pa sa kabila ng panganib ng kamatayan.

May tagumpay pa rin na natamo ang mga tagapagtanggol ng Bataan:

“The end of formal resistance, however, saw the birth of a strong, nationwide, guerilla resistance against the Japanese—a struggle for freedom which sustained the ideals of Filipinos throughout their colonial history.

“...the heroic struggle brought out the best in the Filipino character in the face of adversity and served as a beacon to freedom loving peoples everywhere.” –Ricardo Trota Jose

6 MAYO 1942

Matapos ang isang matagumpay na pagsalakay, sa kabila ng halos isang buwan na pakikipaglaban, ang isla ng Corregidor ay bumagsak sa mga Hapones.

Pinakahuli ang Corregidor sa mga bumagsak sa mga Hapones. Naging inspirasyon ng daigdig ang kagitingan ng mga manananggol upang ipagpatuloy ang laban, “Remember Bataan and Corregidor.”

Sa kabila ng kabiguan, may tagumpay na pamana ang Corregidor sa Kasaysayan ng Digmaang Pasipiko:

“The Monkey Point radio intercept station had a very key role in providing intelligence on Japanese naval victories in Coral Sea and Midway...

“Had Corregidor fallen sooner, had the intercept station been destroyed, the vital information would not have been relayed. The victories at Coral Sea and Midway would not have been possible, and the war would have taken a turn for the worse. Thus was Corregidor’s important role in the Pacific War.” –Ricardo Trota Jose

Marami sa mga sundalo na mula sa Bataan at Corregidor ay nagtipon pa ng mga kasama at lumaban bilang mga gerilyero hanggang matapos ang digmaan.

May mga bayaning Pilipino na hindi nakipagtulungan sa mga Hapones. Nang mahuli si Punong Mahistrado Jose Abad Santos ng mga Hapones, hindi siya pumayag na makipagtulungan sa mga Hapones.

Nasaksihan ng kanyang anak na si Pepito ang kanyang mga huling sandal.

May mga bayani rin na sinasabing nakipagtulungan sa mga Hapones, itinuring na papet. Subalit maraming nailigtas na buhay.

Nang lisanin ni Quezon ang Maynila, iniwan niya kay Jose P. Laurel ang bilin na makipagtulungan sa mga Hapones upang maging maayos ang sitwasyon sa Pilipinas.

6 MAYO 1943

Binisita ni Punong Ministro Hideki Tojo ang Maynila. Tila, “Banzai!” ang isinisigaw ng maraming Pilipino. Iyon pala ay “Bangkay!”

1 OKTUBRE 1943

Sa isang pagpupulong sa Tokyo, hiniling ni Ministro Tojo kay Laurel na ideklara na ang pakikidigma ng mga Pilipino laban sa Estados Unidos at mga kakampi.

AV:

Laurel: I, Jose P. Laurel, ...do hereby proclaim that a state of war exist between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America and Great Britain!"

VO:

"It was a shock to all three of us; we did not expect this instruction and we were not prepared to meet it on the spot. I silently prayed and said the Pater Noster.

"...I got up to say as politely as I could that I could not comply with the request. I said that my people would not approve of it; that I could not carry them; that I have never been a popular leader;

"...that even if I should be willing to do what they wanted me to do would be a leader without following because the Filipinos were opposed to such a step; and that it would not be 'decent' for the Filipinos to declare war against the United States that was their benefactor and ally and that only unworthy people could be expected to do that." – Jose P. Laurel

"He then offered the party sums of money 'necessary for the achievement of independence.' Laurel turned down the offer. Tojo, again unprepared for rejection, told Laurel that he was ready to assist them in any way. Laurel asked for an airplane to take them home. Tojo gave it to them." – Ricardo Trota Jose

Nang siya ay maupo bilang pangulo, kanya lamang kinilala na mayroon nang digmaan sa pagitan ng Republika ng Pilipinas at Estados Unidos. Hindi katulad sa Indonesia, kung saan maraming Indones ang namatay sa iba't ibang bansa para sa mga Hapones, walang ginawa si Laurel upang magpatala ng mga Pilipino upang lumaban para sa mga Hapones.

14 OKTUBRE 1943—Idineklara ng mga Hapones ang Kasarinlan ng mga Pilipino. Itinaas nina Hen. Artemio Ricarte at Hen. Emilio Aguinaldo ang watawat ng Pilipinas sa Legislative Building.

"Kihara Jitaro appeared at Malacañang, stating that he was to be Laurel's adviser. Laurel told him: 'I don't need an adviser. I could be your adviser, Kihara, but you cannot be my adviser. You had better get out!'

"When Kihara refused, Laurel saw General Kuroda about this and also complained about the Japanese guards. Malacañang became the bastion of the Philippine Republic." – Ricardo Trota Jose

Ayon pa sa kwento ng mga gerilyero, mismong si Laurel ang nakikipagkita sa kanila sa pangpang ng Ilog Pasig sa Palasyo ng Malacañang!

Sa kabila ng bangis ng mga pagpaparusa at pagpatay ng mga Hapones, marami nailigtas na mga buhay dahil sa kanyang pakikisangkot.

Matapos ang pinakamalaking digmaang pandagat sa Kasaysayan ng Daigdig, nagapi ng mga Amerikano ang mga Hapones at muling nakadaong si MacArthur sa Red Beach, Palo, Leyte noong 20 Oktubre 1944 kasama ang bagong pangulo ng Komonwelt Sergio Osmeña, at si Hen. Carlos P. Romulo.

Sa pagdaong ng hukbo ni MacArthur sa Lingayen, Pangasinan noong Enero 1945, inihanda ang muling pagbawi sa Lungsod ng Maynila.

3 PEBRERO 1945

Nakapasok ang mga Amerikano sa Maynila at noong gabi ay kagyat na napalaya ang *civilian internment camp* sa Unibersidad ng Sto. Tomas nang hindi masyadong manlaban ang mga bantay na karamihan ay taga-Formosa na nasa ilalim ng opisyal na Hapones.

Noong araw na iyon ng pagpasok ng mga Amerikano, may pagkakahati nang naganap sa Hukbong Hapones. Inatasan na ni Heneral Tomoyuki Yamashita (14th Area Army), Pangkalahatang Tagapamuno ng Lahat ng Hukbong Hapones sa Pilipinas, na lumisan ang mga Hapones sa Maynila at tumungo sa kabundukan upang doon na lamang ipagpatuloy ang pakikibaka.

Ang Hukbong Katihan (army) ay lumilisan na noon palayo ng Maynila.

Samantala, hindi sumang-ayon sa pag-alis si Rear Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi ng Manila Naval Defence Force na naniwalang kaya pa niyang ipagtanggol ang Maynila. Dali-daling pinakalat ni Iwabuchi ang 17,000 mga kawal mula sa Hukbong Pandagat, na walang kasanayan sa pakikipagdigma sa lupa.

Nahirapan ang mga Amerikano na makausad patimog sapagkat lahat ng mga tulay ay pinabagsak na mismo ng mga Hapones.

23-25 PEBRERO 1945

Pagbomba sa pamamagitan ng *artillery shelling* at pagsalakay ang naging taktika ng mga Amerikano sa pagkubkob ng Intramuros sapagkat tumanggi si MacArthur na *aerial bombardment* ang gamitin upang mabawasan ang pagkawasak na idudulot nito sa lungsod. Sa huling araw, napasakamay ng mga Amerikano ang Fort Santiago.

26-28 PEBRERO 1945

Naaagaw mula sa mga Hapones ang mga gusaling Legislative at Agriculture.

3 MARSO 1945—Sa pagsuko ng mga nalalabing mga sundalong Hapones sa gusali ng Finance, “napalaya” ang Maynila.

Ang halaga ng “Liberasyon” ng Maynila:

16,665 mula sa Hukbong Hapones
1,010 mula sa Hukbong Amerikano

100,000 MGA SIBILYAN.

Ang lubos na nagbaka ng kasawian ay ang mga Manileño, bunga ng walang habas na pagbomba ng mga Amerikano subalit mas marami dito ay idinulot ng mga Hapones na sistematikong nangmasaker ng mga sibilyan sa isang buwan na iyon. Pinaniniwalaang may basbas ng Tokyo.

Ang Maynila ang naging IKALAWANG PINAKAGUMUHONG “ALLIED” NA LUNGSOD SA DAIGDIG, pangalawa lamang sa Warsaw, Poland. Isang buwan kung kailan nagahasa ang Maynila ng brutalidad ng mga Amerikano at mga Hapones.

Ayon sa mga historyador, hindi lamang mga Amerikano ang nagpalaya ng bayan, kundi ang mga gerilyero at beteranong Pilipino sa buong bansa:

“In fact, by the time ‘liberation day’ came in October 1944, large parts of the archipelago had already been cleared of Japanese, thus making the American efforts less costly. And yet, the contribution of the Filipino to the war has not been justly recognized.” –Samuel K. Tan

Ibinalik ng mga Amerikano ang Kasarinlan ng Pilipinas noong 4 Hulyo 1946.

Muling itinatag ng mga Pilipino ang kanilang bansa tungo sa minimithing kaginhawaan ng lahat.

At matapos ang kalahating siglo: Ang mga bakas ng kagitingan at tagumpay na iniwan sa iba’t ibang pook sa buong Pilipinas...Sa pangangalaga ng pribadong sektor at ng pamahalaan ...patuloy sana nating ingatan at pahalagahan...

Ang mga bayaning beterano at mga kawal ...patuloy sana nating alagaan.

Sapagkat nang tawagan sila upang ipagtanggol tayo, hindi sila umurong at umuwi sa kanilang tahanan, bagkus sila ay nahirapan, marami ang namatay, hindi para sa kanilang sarili, kundi para sa kanilang mga anak at kanilang mga apo.

Dahil sa kanila, kaya ka nabubuhay ngayon. Bilang pagpapahalaga sa kanilang mga sakripisyo NASA SA ATIN ANG PAGPAPATULOY NG KABAYANIHAN.

PILIPINONG KONSEPTO NG BAYANI:

“Isang nagkukusang makipagtulungan nang walang anumang bayad sa mga gawaing pangkomunidad.”—Zeus A. Salazar

IKAW YON, PINOY!

MULTI-AGENCY TASK FORCE FOR THE
2010 OBSERVANCE OF ARAW NG KAGITINGAN
AND PHILIPPINE VETERANS’ WEEK

KAGAWARAN NG TANGGULANG PAMBANSA

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*Iniaalay sa lahat ng mga Beteranong Pilipino sa lahat ng digmaan
At kay Dr. Ricardo Trota José,
kung kanino utang ng sambayanan ang pagpapanatiling buhay ng kanilang mga kwento*

VICTORY: The Heroic Image of Philippine Veterans During The Pacific War

Written and translated from the Filipino by Xiao Chua

For many years, the perspective on Filipino Veterans in books and documentaries had been that of loss and defeat during World War 2. That the only ones who destroyed our country were the Japanese, that the real liberators of this country were the Americans. But if we are going to look at history in our own perspective, we will see the true story of valor and victory, despite the sacrifice, destruction and death, of the heroic Filipino veterans during the Pacific War (1941-1945)

The Philippines at the beginning of the 1940s: A picture of calm before the storm.

We were starting to build the Filipino Nation-State under the Americans through the ten-year Commonwealth of the Philippines, which started in 1935. Manuel Luis Quezon was the president.

While in other countries, the threat of fascism and dictatorship was prevalent. Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy dominated Europe while the Japanese already invaded China and committed atrocities during the 1936 “Rape of Nanking.”

To respond to this threat, the government issued Commonwealth Act no. 1, the Philippines Defense Act. The citizenry were called to train in defending the country from this threat. In schools, ROTC was implemented.

To be able to save money, they used in these trainings obsolete World War 1 rifles, surplus uniforms from the States which were bigger in size, and helmet made of coconut.

Despite these obstacles, according to President Quezon’s military adviser and former Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General Douglas MacArthur, the Philippines will be able to defend itself adequately by April of 1942.

Meanwhile, to prepare for their grand plan of an “Asia for the Asians,” the Japanese extensively spied on the Philippines. At that time, the Japanese were already prevalent in many Philippine industries as gardeners, barbers, vendors, photographers, and others.

7 DECEMBER 1941, 7:55 AM

The Japanese Forces had a surprise attack on the naval base of the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, early morning of 8 December in the Philippines.

According to biographer William Manchester, MacArthur wasn’t able to decisively move in those very important early hours, and like most people, was gravely surprised.

The whole morning, American planes at Clarkfield, Pampanga were flying to prepare for the impending Japanese attack. When they landed to briefly refuel, the Japanese attacked by noon and destroyed the whole fleet of American planes.

Edmundo F. Nolasco: Yes, we knew that war was coming, but we were so sure that it would only last for a couple of days.

Eliseo D. Rio: What can Japan do against Americans? That was the thing that we were thinking of.

10 DECEMBER 1941

The bombing of Manila

Despite the lack of equipment and training, and thinking that the war was just like a “picnic,” many Filipinos enlisted to fight the Japanese and defend their native land.

Because of the quality of their products and height, the Filipinos underestimated the Japanese and thought that the war will only last a couple of weeks.

22 DECEMBER 1941

For each soldier, 12 bullets were given, when they faced the large Japanese land troops which landed in Lingayen, Pangasinan. With the arrival of this larger force, the Filipino soldiers were forced to retreat.

Quezon, MacArthur and the Commonwealth government evacuated to the isle of Corregidor, Cavite, “The Rock.” To prevent the Japanese from destroying Manila, MacArthur declared it an “Open City” on 26 December. This declaration didn’t stop the Japanese from bombing the city.

When MacArthur saw the strength of the Japanese Forces, he implemented War Plan Orange 3 in January 1942. All Filipino-American forces scattered around the country were collected to defend just one area, the Bataan peninsula, and the isle of Corregidor while awaiting food, medicine and troop reinforcements from the government of the United States.

Despite the audacity of the Japanese aggressors to take Bataan, it was successfully defended by the Filipinos:

Even the Igorots, and other indigenous peoples, joined the fight.

The Filipino-American Forces were in high morale, especially because they were expecting American reinforcements. The “Voice of Freedom” from Corregidor became the voice of victory of the defenders of Bataan.

To discourage the morale of the defenders of Bataan, Japanese propaganda were sent to the defenders to make them want to come home and abandon the fight.

Photos of beautiful women and their families were shown by the Japanese.

The defenders countered this by remembering the woman found raped and killed by the Japanese, "Remember Erlinda."

9 FEBRUARY 1942

After frustrating the Japanese advance in Bataan, and because of the many fatalities from their troops, the Japanese retreated under Gen. Masaharu Homma while awaiting Japanese reinforcements.

In the meantime, the Japanese already had most of Southeast Asia...

...EXCEPT BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR.

According to Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Filipino soldier is **THE BEST WARRIOR IN THE WORLD**.

Floro Henson: The propaganda then was that, President Roosevelt is sending a long convoy of reinforcements so, just keep on holding Bataan, ...keep on holding.

Unbeknownst to the Bataan defenders, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt already decided that the US cannot focus on two different fronts of war, the Atlantic and the Pacific Theaters.

War Plan Rainbow 5 was implemented which states that the worst enemy must be the first one to be defeated. Therefore, to defeat Adolf Hitler first, "Europe First."

All reinforcements intended for the defenders of Bataan were to be sent to help the Europeans and the Britons defeat Germany and Italy.

Quezon told MacArthur:

"How typically American to anguish over the fate of a distant cousin (Britain) while a daughter (the Philippines) is being raped in the back room."

Quezon left Corregidor and in the United States continued to be the president of the Commonwealth Government-in-exile.

MacArthur left the Philippines and promised, "I SHALL RETURN."

APRIL 1942

The Japanese, with renewed strength, attacked Bataan once more. Because of hunger and disease, the defenders were easily defeated.

3 APRIL 1942: Mt. Samat was captured.

9 APRIL 1942

This “Voice of Freedom” broadcast, read by Norman Reyes and written by Salvador P. Lopez was heard:

“Bataan has fallen, but the spirit that made it stand—a beacon to all the liberty-loving peoples of the world cannot fail.”

If the American leaders did not surrender, the Filipinos will fight to the death.

Jose R. Austria: We thought that we will die.

Juan A. Sanchez: When we ran out of bullets, we would dig out boulders atop of Mt. Samat and rolled them toward the invaders.

Emilio C. Aquino: Many of us wept when we heard that broadcast. But what can we do, that was our fate.

The remaining 60-70 thousand Filipino soldiers, and 11,000 Americans, despite promises of fair treatment, were made to walk 120 km. from Mariveles, Bataan to San Fernando, Pampanga; taken aboard smelly trains to Capas, Tarlac; and made to walk an additional 13 km. to Camp O’Donnell.

This was famously called the “Death March.”

Even if the Japanese were mercilessly killing evading soldiers, and those who would cause the slowing down of the procession, the civilian heroes secretly handed water, food and even helped in making other soldiers escape despite the danger of sure death.

Floro Henson: It was hell! It was summer; April and so hot!

Emilio C. Aquino: Life (at Camp O’Donnell) turned out to be hopeless.

Jose R. Austria: Because in our barracks where we were assigned, we were about 200 in a barracks that can accommodate only about 100. So, it was terrible.

Juan A. Sanchez: I got sick with malaria and beri-beri. And chicken lice stuck to our bodies.

Emilio C. Aquino: When you wake up in the morning, it’s still dark, you can faintly see this long convoy, carrying the dead. Even after the sun sets, the line is still long. Imagine that.

Victory was still achieved even with the defeat of the defenders of Bataan:

“The end of formal resistance, however, saw the birth of a strong, nationwide, guerilla resistance against the Japanese—a struggle for freedom which sustained the ideals of Filipinos throughout their colonial history.

“...the heroic struggle brought out the best in the Filipino character in the face of adversity and served as a beacon to freedom loving peoples everywhere.” –Ricardo Trota Jose

6 MAY 1942

After a successful attack, and after one month of holding out, the isle of Corregidor fell down to Japanese hands.

Corregidor was the last to fall to the Japanese. The courage of the defenders became an inspiration to the world to continue to fight for freedom, "Remember Bataan and Corregidor."

Even in defeat, there is a victorious heritage that was left by Corregidor to the over-all victory of the Pacific War:

"The Monkey Point radio intercept station had a very key role in providing intelligence on Japanese naval victories in Coral Sea and Midway..."

"Had Corregidor fallen sooner, had the intercept station been destroyed, the vital information would not have been relayed. The victories at Coral Sea and Midway would not have been possible, and the war would have taken a turn for the worse. Thus was Corregidor's important role in the Pacific War." –Ricardo Trota Jose

Many soldiers from Bataan and Corregidor called on others to join them fight once again as guerilla units until war's end.

There were Filipino heroes who did not collaborate with the Japanese. When Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos was captured, he did not agree to become a leader of government under the Japanese.

His son Pepito saw his last moments.

Jose Abad Santos, Jr: He cautioned me and said, "Do not cry Pepito, show these people that you are brave, not everybody is given the opportunity to die for one's country, son." He marched proudly with his shirt flapping. And then after that I went up to the house and I took my prayer book and read the prayer for the dead. And after a few minutes, I hear a volley of shots and I knew that my father was gone.

There were also heroes who collaborated with the Japanese and were called puppets, but by doing so saved many many Filipino lives.

When Quezon left Manila, he handed the responsibility to Justice Jose P. Laurel to collaborate with the Japanese to ensure an orderly situation in the Philippines.

6 MAY 1943

Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo visited Manila. Many Filipinos seemed to be shouting, "Banzai!" They were actually shouting, "Bangkay!" (Dead corpse)

1 OCTOBER 1943

In a meeting in Tokyo, PM Tojo asked Laurel to declare a state of war between the Philippines and the United States and its allies.

“It was a shock to all three of us; we did not expect this instruction and we were not prepared to meet it on the spot. I silently prayed and said the Pater Noster.

“...I got up to say as politely as I could that I could not comply with the request. I said that my people would not approve of it; that I could not carry them; that I have never been a popular leader;

“...that even if I should be willing to do what they wanted me to do would be a leader without following because the Filipinos were opposed to such a step; and that it would not be ‘decent’ for the Filipinos to declare war against the United States that was their benefactor and ally and that only unworthy people could be expected to do that.” – Jose P. Laurel

“He then offered the party sums of money ‘necessary for the achievement of independence.’ Laurel turned down the offer. Tojo, again unprepared for rejection, told Laurel that he was ready to assist them in any way. Laurel asked for an airplane to take them home. Tojo gave it to them.” – Ricardo Trota Jose

When he became president, he only “recognized” that a state of war already existed between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States. Unlike in Indonesia wherein many Indonesians died in different lands fighting for the Japanese, Laurel didn’t do anything to conscript Filipinos to fight for the Japanese.

14 OCTOBER 1943—The Japanese proclaimed Philippine Independence. General Artemio Ricarte and General Emilio Aguinaldo raise the Filipino flag at the Legislative Building.

“Kihara Jitaro appeared at Malacañang, stating that he was to be Laurel’s adviser. Laurel told him: ‘I don’t need an adviser. I could be your adviser, Kihara, but you cannot be my adviser. You had better get out!’

“When Kihara refused, Laurel saw General Kuroda about this and also complained about the Japanese guards. Malacañang became the bastion of the Philippine Republic.” – Ricardo Trota Jose

According to the stories from some guerillas, Laurel himself met with them at the banks of the Pasig in Malacañan Palace!

Despite Japanese cruelty in carrying out tortures and executions, many lives were saved because of Laurel’s intervention.

After the greatest naval battle in World History, the Americans defeated the Japanese and MacArthur was able to land at Red Beach, Palo, Leyte on 20 October 1944 with the new president of the Philippine Commonwealth Sergio Osmeña, and Gen. Carlos P. Romulo.

When MacArthur's forces landed in Lingayen, Pangasinan on January 1945, they launched the recapture of the City of Manila.

3 FEBRUARY 1945

The Americans entered Manila and by night they immediately liberated the civilian internment camp in the University of Sto. Tomas without much resistance from the guards that were mostly Taiwanese under Japanese officials.

On the day the Americans came, the Japanese Forces were divided. General Tomoyuki Yamashita of the 14th Area Army, Commanding General of all Japanese Forces in the Philippines, ordered all the Japanese out of Manila and proceed to the mountains to continue the resistance there.

The Army was leaving Manila at that time.

But Rear Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi of the Manila Naval Defence Force did not follow the orders. He believed that Manila can still be defended. Iwabuchi deployed 17,000 men from his naval forces who were not trained for land combat.

The Americans move to the south of Manila was frustrated when the Japanese destroyed all bridges leading to the center of the city.

23-25 FEBRUARY 1945

Bombing by *artillery shelling* became the strategy of the Americans in retaking Intramuros. MacArthur discouraged *aerial bombardment* to minimize the damage it would inflict on the city and its civilians. During the last day (25 February), the Americans recaptured Fort Santiago.

26-28 FEBRUARY 1945

From the Japanese, the Legislative and Agriculture Buildings were recaptured.

3 MARCH 1945—With the surrender of the remaining Japanese soldiers in the Finance Building, Manila was “liberated.”

The price of the “Liberation” of Manila:

16,665 deaths among the Japanese
1,010 deaths among the Americans

100,000 dead civilians.

The Manileños suffered the most, due also by extensive American bombings, but more so because of the systematic massacre of civilians by the Japanese in that final month. A massacre believed to have the final approval of leaders in Tokyo.

Manila became the SECOND MOST DESTROYED ALLIED CITY IN THE WORLD, second only to Warsaw, Poland. In only one month, Manila was raped by American and Japanese brutality.

According to historians, the Americans were not the only ones who liberated our motherland, but the Filipino guerillas and veterans in the whole archipelago:

“In fact, by the time ‘liberation day’ came in October 1944, large parts of the archipelago had already been cleared of Japanese, thus making the American efforts less costly. And yet, the contribution of the Filipino to the war has not been justly recognized.” –Samuel K. Tan

Floro Henson: Our country was invaded by Japan, whether it was invaded because of America or not it seems to me, that it should not matter. It is our country and I think it is our duty to defend it.

Eliseo D. Rio: The significance of Bataan is it demonstrated the spirit of the Filipino as a soldier ...as a fighting man.

Manuel T. Yan: The point here was a call for preparedness. It was a lesson that we cannot afford to miss again.

Emilio C. Aquino: If you really love your country, you will surely remember.

The Americans returned Philippine Independence on 4 July 1946.

The Filipinos once more rebuilt their country towards the “kaginhawaan” (well-being) of all.

And after half-a-century: The battlefields of valor and victory left in different locations in the Philippines under the supervision of the private sector and of the government, must be continuously maintained and cherished.

The heroic veterans and soldiers ...must be continuously cared for.

Because when they were called to defend us, they did not cower and went back to their homes, but they suffered, many were killed, not for themselves, but for their children and grandchildren.

Because of their sacrifices, you are alive today. To make us worthy of their sacrifices, it is up to us to continue their heroism.

The Filipino definition of a “bayani” is someone who works towards the good of the community without expecting anything in return.

FILIPINO, THIS IS WHO YOU ARE!