



From the Commander

An article published in The New York Times on November 26, 1945 reported that Lt. Gen. Shiyoku Kuo, who was in charge of POW and Internment camps on Luzon from October 1944 to January 1945, testified in the war crimes trials of General Yamashita that conditions were "good" in Cabanatuan and Santo Tomas camps. Unfortunately, internees in Santo Tomas were dying of malnutrition at a rate of 1 or 2 a day, an increasing rate that in December passed 1% of the population each month.

General Kuo testified that, "Sanitary conditions and hospital facilities appeared good and that the inmates appeared well fed and adequately clothed. He added that he did not believe camp staffs had advanced notice of his visits of inspection." (Santo Tomas records show that on October 23 the commandant demanded special activities from the internees to prepare for the visit on October 24, and to show proper "respect".) He also, "...denied receiving any reports of mistreatment of prisoners or internees either from the camp authorities or from the inmates themselves". And so began the great whitewash of Japan's wartime record that continues today.

Aided by Japan-apologists in academia and the media, the Japanese have ramped up an enormous propaganda campaign to convince present day populations that Japan was largely innocent of wrongdoing and that America and its allies waged a merciless and immoral war against Japan. With the continual decline in the number of people with firsthand knowledge of Japan's duplicity, this campaign is bearing fruit.

One example is a major campaign underway to cast the blame for the terrible destruction of Manila and the slaughter of a huge number of its residents directly on the U.S. forces invading the city. A documentary now being made is intended to rehabilitate General Yamashita, who was executed as a war criminal in part for the Manila Massacre. It has been

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The Battle of Manila Myth and Fact

This article is excerpted from a speech given by Peter Parsons on February 7, 2008 at the Ortigas WW II library in Manila. It is of particular importance now as various Japan-apologists are attacking General MacArthur as the architect of the tragedy that encompassed Manila between February 3 and March 3, 1945. Though no precise numbers are known for the enormity of the massacre, it is generally accepted that approximately 20,000 civilians died as a result of the battle and the Japanese massacred 80,000, leaving the city one of the most destroyed of WW II. And as Peter points out, the residents of Manila were starving to death, and had we counted these, the numbers in the massacre would be much higher.

General Yamashita was supreme commander of the Japanese forces in the Philippines, who gathered 250,000 men to resist the American invasion of Luzon, establishing his headquarters in Baguio and leaving Admiral Iwabuchi in command of the forces in Manila.

*Peter Parsons is an author and documentary maker including **Manila 1945, The Forgotten Atrocities**. He is the son of the legendary Chick Parsons who played a major role in supplying the guerrillas and the anti-Japanese underground in the Philippines by submarine during WWII. He has both filed War Correspondent's reports from an active war zone, and has owned a newspaper.*

He subsequently re-edited the text from his speech and included photos, citations and references. The full text is available at <http://bacepow.net/mythvsfact.pdf>

There are two very basic books on the Battle of Manila, Bibles sort of. One is Alfonso Aluit's *By Sword and Fire* published in 1994; the other is a US Army publication of 1963 by Robert Ross Smith called *Triumph in the Philippines*. There are a lot more, including one published to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the catastrophe. But there is little that can be added to what is written in the first two. The many memoirs and personal stories lend depth and color and horror, and it is recommended to any student or researcher to read them all. There was also an early equivalent of Aluit's book in Spanish called *El Terror Amarillo en Filipinas*, by Antonio Perez de Olaguer which was published in Spain in 1947 while the wounds were still open. An abridged version of this - in English - with a new title a bit more politically acceptable these days, *Terror in Manila, February 1945*. These three books form a deeply and broadly researched platform from which to dive into the subject.

I discovered that the massacre and rape of Manila was not owned by a Spanish and mestizo elite. Here were the names and pictures of Filipino after Filipino, plus Irish, Russians, Germans, Chinese, Spanish, Americans, Jews (of whatever nationality) all being killed indiscriminately. But at heart, it was a **Filipino event**, a Filipino massacre: a nearly totally forgotten occurrence. And this became what I wanted to portray in our documentary. But at that time my

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optioned for showing in the U.S. by our own PBS network, a government and subscriber sponsored operation. The accompanying article by Peter Parsons describes the actual conditions with which General MacArthur was faced when recapturing the city, a far different story from the one now being told by the Japan-apologists.

Exacerbating this situation is the recent election of Shinzo Abe as Prime Minister of Japan. According to The New York Times editorial on January 2, 2013, he has signaled that he might seek to revise Japan's 1993 apologies for its World War II aggression, including one for using Koreans and other women as sex slaves. A broader apology by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 conceded that "through its colonial rule and invasion," Japan had caused "tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations."

Those of us who were there during that terrible war are all that remains of the collective memory of Japan's cruelty. It is incumbent upon us to speak up and set the record straight at every opportunity, and in every case where Japan-apologists seek to distort the record.

Angus Lorenzen



The Japanese generously provide supplementary nutrition for their prisoners

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main effort was to discover material about the Philippine resistance movement, the guerrillas, and wherever possible about my father in particular.

At the war crimes trials, the blazing testimony of Nicanor Roxas related what he had been told by Pio Duran, the second supreme head of the Makapilis, that the Japanese had planned to destroy Manila and the civilian population. He said the Japanese had located heavy artillery and aimed it at Manila from positions surrounding the city. In the documentary film by David B. Griffin perhaps you noticed a very young Carlos P. Romulo and Griffin saying that Yamashita asked for instructions from Tokyo and the destruction of Manila and its population was his answer. I had not come across this brief documentary before doing my own, and I am surprised and gratified that our conclusions are nearly identical.

At the MacArthur Memorial in Norfolk, Virginia, we read guerrilla reports being radioed to MacArthur's GHQ outlining the buildup of defenses within the city of Manila by the Japanese. These reports were from people like Captain Bartolomeo Cabangbang, who came in by submarine with my father on the east coast of Luzon in August of 1944, and Lt. Edwin Ramsey, leader of the East Central Luzon Guerrillas Area. This defensive/offensive buildup started immediately after the departure of President Laurel and others of his cabinet, to Baguio. The communiqués are replete with locations of pillboxes, ammunition dumps, fortifications, troops, and information about buildings and bridges being prepared for demolition. This activity began while Yamashita was still in town. The for-

tification was going on during December and January. There is even one astonishing recommendation from Cabangbang in which he recommends to MacArthur that US planes bomb a certain location on the Escolta where Japanese had stored weapons and explosives.

It may have been true that General Yamashita told President Laurel that Manila would be declared an open city. Even the guerrilla messages confirm this. But his words were belied by the heavy fortification of key points and intersections throughout the city, especially south of the Pasig River, and the setting of explosive charges in the important buildings and bridges. The Japanese Military Dispositions map shows at least 15 manned fortifications throughout Manila during February 1945. A radio message to MacArthur on January 13, 1945 tells of Yamashita's reneging on his promise of an open city; his logic now was, "the complete demilitarization of the city would lay it open to a possible paratroop invasion from Mindoro". The General's reasoning is baffling especially in view of the further observation in the same report that, "As of January 7 [Japanese troops] have constructed foxholes and pillboxes on practically all street corners." Does this sound like anyone is thinking "open city?"

In the video you will hear testimony from one woman, Lita Rocha Clearsky who was warned by a Japanese officer to get out of Manila, to take everything and leave because Manila would be "no good." And Ramsey's agents reported that four German nationals in Manila received a circular from Japanese High Command to evacuate the city. It was known to the Japa-

nese officers that Manila and its civilian population were going to suffer horribly; some were good enough to tell people to leave. Charo Manzano, who had spent months in Ft. Santiago after the disappearance of her army/guerrilla husband Narciso, told me that she was continually being warned by Japanese to move; they moved and they survived. Japanese planned out their neighborhood killings and knew about them in advance. There was for the most part not much randomness about these attacks on civilians. Some people were lucky enough to be forewarned.

There are a few myths I have intended to put to question, if not if not demolish:

1. That the city was destroyed because the American forces did not let the Japanese have an escape route; that they completely bottled up the Japanese who were forced to lash out, understandably and reasonably, in a fight to the death, much as cornered rats do; [the burning and demolition of the city began on the first three days of February—long before there was any encirclement by US forces.]

2. The equally indefensible, from my point of view, tenet that Yamashita intended to leave Manila an Open City. On this latter myth, a brief observation: Gen. MacArthur had left the city OPEN in 1941. There were no American or Filipino troops in Manila. All fortifications, like Forts Santiago and McKinley and Nichols Field were abandoned. [Side note: at the end of the war the Japanese were saying that every living Filipino was a guerrilla, regardless of age or sex, but in the early days no one knew this, not even MacArthur, nor any Filipino.] Yamashita, after telling Pres. Laurel he was going to declare Manila an Open City, dedicated 4,000 of his Shobu Force to defend North Manila. There was no OPEN CITY in 1945. And Yamashita was not a misunderstood and disobeyed saint.

It is also interesting that the Japanese planned a defense of the city of gradually falling back from their north Manila positions, crossing the Pasig and literally digging in **among the local populace** there. When they left north Manila they set in on fire. Not content with torching Binondo and Tondo, they also began setting fire to the Ermita area. So much for the bottle theory.

Two books, one by three British writers, *The Battle For Manila*, and *By Sword and Fire* by Alfonso J. Aluit, fall into the trap of blaming the Americans. The irony of the British book is that the conclusions of the authors do not coincide with one of the men who was largely responsible for funding their writing of the book, Roderick Hall who is a survivor of the Japanese Occupation and of the Battle for Manila; it was all the more personal for him since the Japanese gratuitously killed his mother.

The British authors put it this way: “The third lesson (on urban warfare) is even more mundane: never surround a city

entirely, but always leave an escape route so that the enemy is not forced to fight to the death. Again, the Americans failed to bear this in mind.” Among my responses to this is: even if they were trapped, is that enough to excuse their wanton massacring of civilians? Aside from the fact that many if not most of the egregious massacres occurred **before** the Japanese were sealed in. And since they had made every building in the city a fortress, it doesn’t seem to me they were planning an exodus. Or do they mean “fight to the death of all *civilians*?” This was a fairly rogue concept.



The Japanese would burn a home and kill those who fled the fire

They began rounding up civilians in Fort Santiago on February 4th. On the 6th they start killing off these people. They also began rounding up civilians along Singalong Street and beheading them—this went on for a long time. On February 9th behold the massacre of more innocents at St. Paul’s College; the near elimination of Elpidio Quirino’s family; the Vincentian Fathers and the Chinese civilians at the Paules Church on San Marcelino met horrible fates on this day. And the next day, the 10th is a particularly black date for Manila. The German Club was turned into a brutal and cynical killing field with no one spared on account of age, sex, or nationality. Various killings took place house to house throughout Ermita and Malate and Paco not to mention those committed at the Red Cross HQ on Isaac Peral.

Neither Iwabuchi nor Yamashita could have ordered or performed the massacres this organized and of this magnitude without having received such orders, or received permission to commit them.

And the Japanese were still not “bottled up” or trapped. Although some think this might have happened as early as the 10th, it is Rear Admiral Iwabuchi himself who declares this to be a fact on February 17th, the date of the massacre of the San Juan de Dios Hospital staff.

But Aluit puts it this way: “... [General] Douglas MacArthur bears as much responsibility as [Rear Admiral] Sanji Iwabuchi does for the cruel fate that was inflicted on Manila.

“By adopting the strategy of bottling up the adversary in an area with a resident population of one million, the Ameri-

cans permitted the Japanese no alternative but a last ditch, scorched earth stand. That the Japanese behaved like the cornered rat of legend was to be expected.” I have words to describe this observation that cannot be printed. Aluit’s own accounting of daily activity in the battle defies the logic of what he concludes.

This phrase “bottling up” the Japanese is in error, I feel; Japanese who wanted to were fleeing from Manila during the first two weeks of the battle. Robert Ross Smith says that about 4,500 of them escaped across the Marikina River. They had nearly free passage to the east, past Ft. McKinley. And even in mid February there was no action at either Nielsen Field nor at Ft. McKinley. And they had such a strong defense in the south of Manila (Nichols Field) that the American penetration there was delayed until the 12th.

The American troops in Manila came across diaries of Japanese soldiers that revealed they had been ordered to kill all civilians on the field of battle; instructions were given as to how to carry out these orders in a most efficient manner (burning of groups that had been herded into houses, bayoneting, hand-grenading and lastly, by shooting them). Decisions of this sort throughout the Japanese-occupied war theater were normally dictated from Tokyo. This was true even of the disastrous order to move Australian prisoners from one side of northern Borneo to the other--a decision which caused the elimination of ALL 2,500 Australian POWs (except for the six who escaped).

One captured Japanese soldier, Taguchi Hiroshi, says he does not know why he was ordered to do such things, but he was. And he obeyed. He could only surmise that it was because the Filipinos preferred the Americans over the Japanese. As simplistic as this must sound, it is also probably the absolute truth of the matter. From this you would have to examine the culture of the Japanese military, the Emperor worship, the pride factor, the various codes like Bushido and Samurai. But the heart of the matter is sadly, that the Filipinos more closely identified with the Americans than the Japanese.

In Manila, the thoughts of an escape route for the “bottled up Japanese” is totally irrelevant. I have talked to Emmanuel Ocampo, a guerrilla with the ROTC Hunters, who has told me that the southern part of the city would have been easy for the Japanese to leave had they wanted. And this seems to confirm Rod Hall’s thoughts that the southern attack began too late. The Lingayen invasion was on January 9; the 11th Airborne paratroopers (511th Parachute Infantry) did not begin to attack in the vicinity of Nichols Field until February 4th; they waited to be joined by the 188th Infantry coming down from Tagaytay Ridge. Then the combined forces, being shelled by Japanese artillery (from Fort McKinley), engaged the Japanese 3rd Naval Battalion in a battle to reclaim the air base. These were among the strongest defense positions in Manila and the US forces could not claim possession until February 12th.

The oncoming American force was somewhat undermanned and also somewhat lost and it actually depended on guerrillas for their advance to the city, which went along the coast from Cavite. But this begs the question. The Japanese

in Manila (with few exceptions) did not intend to escape, and no one has yet written about their trying to or wanting to. Aluit himself writes that Gen. Yokoyama pointed out to Iwabuchi, as late as February 21, an escape route that a few others had been using, into the foothills of the Sierra Madre. Iwabuchi gave no response to this. This was essentially the same response he offered on February 14 when Yokoyama offered to organize a counter-attack to free Iwabuchi and his troops. The rear admiral was engaged in “gyokusai” (glorious self-annihilation).

I have talked with Filipino historians who have told me that had the American thrust towards Tokyo by-passed the Philippines, the suffering here by starvation and by Japanese brutality would have been nearly as bad, or worse, than what actually transpired. Guerrilla leader Ramsey wrote “Manila [is] doomed with widespread starvation.” There were guerrilla reports that the Japanese planned to take the entire new harvest of rice for their own military uses, and even supervise the harvesting to ensure this. Ramsey had written earlier that “In Manila [an] average of 100 persons [are] dying daily due [to] starvation. And Cabangbang had written on December 24 that the “Nip is busy killing civilians in Manila Districts and Bulacan towns just north of Manila” by gathering men, women and children and machine-gunning them. Town officials were being hanged and beaten. This apparently was a sort of preview show of things to come, or better yet, a dress rehearsal.

Yamashita never declared Manila an Open City, not when he was there and had the power and the authority to do so, and certainly not later when he was holed up in Baguio. The intent seems clear from the start to defend it to the last man and to kill off the civilians therein. Don’t forget his leaving behind 4,000 of his own forces to defend north Manila. Nor that his reason for bringing the “puppet” government to Baguio was to save their lives!

A more eloquent and better summary of what I am trying to say is provided by Armando Ang in his book *The Brutal Holocaust*: “According to reliable evidence gathered from prisoners of war, military personnel, Philippine officials and civilians, and Japanese documents, the Rape of Manila was not a random act of melee, mayhem and wanton destruction, but an act of coldly planned atrocities by the Japanese high command from Tokyo.”



Part of what used to be called “The Pearl of the Orient.”

Word of Mouth

Book review by Sascha Jansen. Available from Outskirts Press, Inc – <http://www.outskirtspress.com>

TERRY

The Inspiring Story of a Little Girl's Survival as a POW during WWII, By Terry Wadsworth Warne

In 1942, General Douglas MacArthur was ordered by President Roosevelt to leave Corregidor for Australia. He and his family left on a PT boat for the island of Mindanao, where they were to hold up on the private Del Monte Plantation to await air transport to Australia, when it was deemed safe to do so. Japanese activities around Mindanao prevented the immediate take off to materialize, causing the General and his family a lengthy delay at the plantation's home of Vi and Norrie Wadsworth.

The Wadsworths were one of seven families employed at the California Packing Company's Del Monte plantation, where the best varieties of pineapple were grown. This property had been chosen by the US Army for its strategic location and importance to national safety and security to build a sturdy airfield, which became the choice for General MacArthur's launching point to Australia. Because of the military security surrounding Del Monte, the Japanese were not aware of the ground and air operations.

Terry Wadsworth, an 11-year-old child at the start of the war, meticulously weaves this amazing tale of war and survival from her experience and exacting memory, with extracts from her mother's and father's personal diaries as well as her own.

Terry tells of small intimate vignettes of the amazing life spent in an island paradise - of the MacArthur's stay in their home - of famed Philippine President, Manuel Quezon and family who accompanied the MacArthurs - of military war machines invading Del Monte, and of their frightening retreat to the hills after MacArthur's departure.

Their escape from the enemy finally ends with their capture, and they find themselves at Davao's Happy Life Blues Cabaret, a racy former cabaret that became a POW camp. There they faced the stricture that, "For every person who escapes, five prisoners will be executed." Sanitation was nil as the enemy denied proper facilities, or any resemblance of disinfectants. A prisoner writes, "Our kitchens were just ten feet from the (open) toilets and some of us just fanned the blow flies off the food."

After sixteen months of this unimaginable situation, they were ordered on board the Shinsei Maru No. 1 on Christmas day, 1943. Aboard a rusty, foul odor freighter overrun by cockroaches and rats and with miserable sanitation conditions, they looked forward to their next destination – Manila – hoping for better air, sanitation and food, but not knowing their fate. Upon arrival, they were sent to the Santo Tomas Internment Camp. Terry's mother Vi, writes: "We were able to get a little bit more extra food. We felt more secure with a big group of Americans and being in Manila."

Typhus claimed quite a few of these prisoners as they settled into Santo Tomas camp life because of the unbelievable sanitary conditions of the Davao camp, and the rodent fleas on the Shinsei Maru. Terry's mother was fortunate to survive the disease.

In January of 1944, Santo Tomas went through a transition for the worse when it was taken over by the Japanese Army. Roll calls became more formalized and stringent twice a day. Surprise searches of quarters were commonplace, including confiscation of belongings. The number of Japanese guards expanded. Rules in bowing to the Japanese were in place, with emphasis on proper form or punishment was meted out. The cut-off of food from friends outside was sorely missed. Watery rice (Lugao) full of weevils and other foreign matter was the norm for their meals. Other damaging and devastating rules became hardships to be tolerated.

With multiple rumors of the advancing of US troops, and battles fought nearing the Philippines, waves of hope ebbed and flowed. Finally, the daring rescue by the 1st Cavalry's Flying Column on February 3, 1945 brought welcomed liberation. Their departure from the Philippines to the United States on the USS John Lykes, was just the beginning of their new life of freedom.

TERRY is a well written book. Mrs. Warne generously includes mini chapters, describing added detail, pertinent war incidents with biographical sketches of certain leaders, and of persons and places of interest. The bibliography is strong and complete, giving the reader a comfortable arena for information and research.

Addendum:

Terry Wadsworth and Tom Warne (her childhood friend in Del Monte and Santo Tomas) met again in California as young adults. They fell in love, married, and lived in Hawaii, back to the Philippines, and traveled as missionaries for their church in Utah.

As an adult, Terry Warne drew on her childhood experiences as a prisoner of war to focus on helping children with broken lives. She served as a foster parent for drug babies and abused, neglected children for 22 years in California, receiving many awards in recognition of her services, including Mother of the Year Award by Utah's Governor, and was active in Scouting for 25 years holding the title of a Silver Beaver.

Terry and Tom's amazing spirit and survival stability is a lesson how one can overcome adversity, passing along to others less fortunate the love and support to make their lives a better place. It is a story not soon forgotten. "Life is what you make of it."

Southern California Luncheon

It has been almost two years since we had a very successful luncheon for our Southern California members, and we are scheduling another for August.

Place: Long Beach Petroleum Club
3636 Linden Avenue
Long Beach, CA

Date: August 24, 2013, 11:30 registration, 12:00 Lunch

Program: The first part of the program will be a discussion of the liberation of Santo Tomas, Bilibid, and Los Baños Internment Camps. The second part will be a movie of the Battle of Manila.

Price: \$30

For details, please contact:

Denise Paige - dtpaige@hotmail.com, (562) 818-6580

Angus Lorenzen - bacepow@earthlink.net, (310) 519-8648



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BACEPOW Newsletter
15 Diamonte Lane
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275