

Japanese Cruelty to War Prisoners Bared

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and Lt. Col. William E. Dyess, air corps, of Albany, Tex. Dyess is dead—killed in a fighter plane crash at Burbank, Calif., recently while preparing to return to duty in the Pacific. Melnik is with Gen. MacArthur in the Southwest Pacific. McCoy on duty in the United States.

"March of Death" told "The three officers stated that several times as many American prisoners of war have died, mostly of starvation, forced hard labor, and general brutality, as the Japanese have ever reported, said the official report.

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O'Donnell, about 2,200 American prisoners died in April and May 1942. In the camp at Cabanatuan, about 3,000 Americans had died up to the end of October 1942. Still heavier mortality occurred among the Filipino prisoners of war at Camp O'Donnell.

The calculated campaign of brutality began as soon as the exhausted American and Filipino soldiers on Batan collapsed under the overwhelming weight of the enemy assault. What was in store for them was to begin with "the march of death"—and Dyess reported that, beaten and hopeless as they were, they never would have surrendered if they had guessed what lay ahead.

Thousands of prisoners were herded together on the Mariveles airfield at daylight April 10, within earshot of the still defiant guns of Corregidor. They had food, but were not permitted to eat. All were searched, their personal belongings seized. Those with Japanese money or tokens were beheaded.

Then, in groups of 500 to 1,000, they began the terrible six-day march, along the national road off Batan toward San Fernando in Pampanga Province, the "march of death" so hideous that it would make the Black Hole of Calcutta sound like a haven of refuge.

Even Patients Herded A Japanese soldier took Dyess' canteen, gave the water to a horse, threw the canteen away. In a broiling sun, the prisoners were herded through clouds of dust. Men recently killed lay along the road, their bodies flattened by Japanese trucks. Patients bombed out of a field hospital were pushed into the marching column. At midnight the entire group was penned in an enclosure too narrow to allow any of them to lie down. They had had no water—a Japanese officer finally permitted them to drink at a dirty carabao wallow.

Before daylight the next day the march was resumed. Still no food for any of them—water at noon from a dirty roadside stream. Another bullpen at night. When exhausted men fell out moaning, no one was allowed to help—those who still marched heard shots behind them.

Six Buried Alive On the third day "we were introduced to a form of torture which came to be known as the sun treatment. We were made to sit in the boiling sun all day without cover. We had very little water; our thirst was intense. Many of us went crazy and several died. *** three Filipino and three American soldiers were buried while still alive. ***

"Along the road in the province of Pampanga there are many wells. Half-crazed with thirst, six Filipino soldiers made a dash for one of the wells. All six were killed. As we passed Lubao we marched by a Filipino soldier gutted and hanging over a barbed wire fence. ***

"Before daylight on April 15 we were marched out and 115 of us were packed into a small narrow-gauge box car. The doors were closed and locked. Movement was impossible. Many of the prisoners were suffering from diarrhea and dysentery. The heat and stench were unbearable. *** at Capiz Tarlac we were taken out and given the sun treatment for three hours. Then we were marched to Camp O'Donnell *** Denied Food For Week "I made that march of about

85 miles in six days on one mess kit of rice. Other Americans made 'the march of death' in 12 days, without any food whatever."

The prisoners taken at Corregidor did not experience that march, but 7,000 Americans and 5,000 Filipinos were packed for a week with no food on a concrete pavement 100 yards square. There was one water spigot for the 12,000—the average wait to fill a canteen was 12 hours. They got their first food—a mess kit of rice and a can of sardines—after seven days.

At Camp O'Donnell there were virtually no water facilities. Prisoners stood in line 6 to 10 hours to get a drink. Clothing went unchanged a month and a half. The principal food was rice, varied twice in two months with enough meat to give one-fourth of the men a piece an inch square. A few times there were comolies, a type of sweet potato, but many were rotten and the prisoners themselves had to root a guard to keep their starving comrades from devouring the rotten vegetables. There was an occasional dab of coconut lard, a little flour, a few mango beans. But there was a black market—those who had money could buy from the Japanese a small can of fish for \$5.

Worked Until Death There was a hospital—a dilapidated building with no facilities, no medicine. Hundreds lay on the bare floor without cover. The doctors did not even have water to wash the human filth from their patients. After one week, the death rate was 20 Americans a day, 150 Filipinos; after two weeks, 50 and 500 respectively. The sick as well as the merely starving were forced into work gangs, and worked until they dropped dead.

About June 1, the Americans were removed from Camp O'Donnell to Cabanatuan, where Dyess joined Melnik and McCoy, who had come in from Corregidor. Conditions there were a little better. There was adequate drinking water, it was possible to bathe in muddy water; but the diet did not improve. And the brutality continued—men were beaten with shovels and golf clubs, "men were literally worked to death."

Fiendish Deed Told Three officers who tried to escape were caught, stripped to their shorts, their hands tied behind them and pulled up by ropes fastened overhead, and kept in this position in the blazing sun for two days; periodically the Japs beat them with a two-by-four; finally one was beheaded and the others shot. By Oct. 26, when Dyess, McCoy and Melnik left Cabanatuan, 3,000 of the American prisoners had died.

The three officers were taken, with 966 other prisoners, to a penal camp at Davao, Mindanao, and put to hard labor. Food was

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slightly better there, but "the salvation of the American prisoners of war." Dyess reported, was the American and British Red Cross supplies, both clothing and food, that finally began to arrive, months later. The beatings, the murder, the studied mistreatment and humiliation continued. By April, 1943, there were 1,100 of the 2,000 prisoners at Davao still able to work.

This was the life from which McCoy, Dyess and Melnik escaped April 4, 1943. The account is based solely on their official reports, but the army and navy said at least four others were known to have escaped from the Philippines—Major Michiel Dobervitch, Ironton, Minn., Austin C. Shofner, Shelbyville, Tenn., and Jack Hawkins, Roston, Tex., and Corp. Reid Carlos Chamberlain, El Cajone, Calif., all of the marine corps.

Jap Tortures Arouse Demands for Retaliation

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sunburned yankees. I am glad the army and navy have finally seen fit to let the American people know what type of an enemy they are fighting so we can get down to business and get this thing over with."

Senator Ball (R-Minn.)—"I find these stories sickening. They prove again that we are up against a barbaric enemy and we've got to lick him completely."

Senator Johnson (D-Colo.)—"This ought to make us realize

more than ever before that we have a tough war to fight in the Pacific."

Filipino Friends Suffer

Japanese efforts to stage a triumphal victory parade through the streets of Manila with ragged, dying American prisoners were offset by friendliness of Filipino civilians.

This was reported today by the war and navy department in an official account of atrocities committed by the Japanese on American and Filipino soldiers captured on Batan and Corregidor.

As the bedraggled prisoners trudged through the streets, some stumbling out of line only to be cuffed back by Japanese guards, the Filipino citizens watched for chances to offer aid.

Then, said Commander Melvyn H. McCoy, one of the prisoners who subsequently escaped, "if no guards were in the immediate vicinity, the Filipinos along the route tried to revive the prisoners with ices, water and fruits. These Filipinos were severely

beaten if caught by the guards."

Japanese propaganda broadcasts telling of American prisoners being fed on chicken and eggs were explained by the War and Navy departments last night—"on one occasion the Japanese gave the American prisoners three chickens for 500 men, and on another occasion 50 eggs for 500 men."

Opposition to Federal Vote Measure Severed

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that the federal war ballot be furnished only to personnel from states which had not arranged to mail absentee ballot 45 days before the November general election.

Senator Hatch (D-N. M.) said Holman had made it clear that the opposition was not against the bill, but against the president.

Taken to Hospital—George Burnett, who resides on East Lane street, has been admitted to Mercy hospital to receive medical treatment. He is a brother of Mrs. A. G. Sutherland and Clint Burnett of Roseburg.

Returns to Camp—Private Leo Bollenbaugh, who has been stationed at Camp Abbot, Bend, Ore., spent the weekend in Astoria visiting at the Jurgensen home and has since left for his new station in Pittsburg, Calif.



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