

BATAAN COUP WON

Counter-Attack by U. S. Forces Smashes Back Japanese on East

BAYONETS ARE USED

Blow Checks Offensive by Enemy on West Coast and Stabilizes Lines

By **C. BROOKS PETERS**

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 25—Operating with the tactical skill characteristic of the great American military leaders of the past, General Douglas MacArthur has counter-attacked on his right flank in the Bataan Peninsula and thwarted a three-dimensional Japanese offensive—from the land, the air and the sea—that threatened to decimate his small force in the Philippines, the War Department announced today.

By a brilliant diverting movement General MacArthur inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and temporarily effected a stabilization of the fighting front on the sector of Luzon Island northwest of Manila.

The War Department communiqué announcing this American coup in the Battle of Bataan termed General MacArthur's manoeuvre "brilliant" and declared that it was carried out with "smashing success."

Foe Strongly Reinforced

The communiqué, covering reports received here to 1 P. M., coincided with General MacArthur's sixty-second birthday, Jan. 26, Philippine time.

Over yesterday and today, Philippine time, which is thirteen hours ahead of Eastern standard time, the Japanese began a heavy assault on the left flank of General MacArthur's line in the north of Bataan Province.

Enjoying complete naval and air superiority in the region, the Japanese were able without serious opposition to land large reinforcements both in Subic Bay and along the west coast of the peninsula.

There were, the communiqué noted, "heavy enemy infiltrations along the beaches and in the mountain passes."

The Japanese assault on the left flank of the American-Filipino forces was buttressed, furthermore, by airplanes, including a small number of heavy bombers. From the South China Sea and Subic Bay the guns of Japanese warships supported the enemy land attack.

The naval guns pounded the tenaciously held American positions in the mountainous terrain of Bataan and laid covering barrages for their advancing infantry.

Greatly inferior both numerically and in firing power the American-Filipino defenders "were forced to give ground with considerable losses" in the face of the shelling, air strafing and rifle fire of the Japanese, the War Department said.

MacArthur's Artillery Effective

When things were apparently at their worst General MacArthur ordered a heavy counter-attack on his extreme right on the Manila Bay side of the peninsula, designed to divert the force of the enemy's thrust on his left. The counter-attack, the War Department said, "scored a smashing success."

General MacArthur appeared to have prepared this counter-blow thoroughly. First he concentrated batteries of 155-mm artillery so that the guns' firing power was, in the word of the communiqué, "powerful."

Then, the way made ready by this barrage, American and Filipino soldiers charged the Japanese with fixed bayonets.

The deadly accuracy of the American artillery, which poured

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shells directly into the Japanese ranks, together with the ferocity of the defenders' charge, was declared completely to have disorganized the enemy infantry.

Japanese soldiers fled from their positions, leaving hundreds of casualties in dead and it may be assumed other hundreds in wounded, as well as large quantities of supplies and equipment on the battlefield, said the communiqué.

The effect of the success of this masterful move by General MacArthur was to relieve pressure on his left, where the fury of the Japanese assault had forced the American-Filipino forces to retire.

The War Department reported that the situation on the Bataan Peninsula was "temporarily stabilized" as the result of this victory.

"However, a renewed attack by the enemy may be expected as soon as a reorganization (by the Japanese) has been effected," the War Department warned.

General MacArthur has succeeded in repulsing every Japanese attempt to dislodge him from the strong positions on his mountainous right flank. The landing of sizable enemy contingents on the beaches of the west coast of Bataan Peninsula and the shore of Subic Bay threatens to flank General MacArthur's mountain stronghold.

The expected "renewed attack"

by the Japanese will undoubtedly strike the American flank again. There, advancing along sheer cliffs, the Japanese forces are driving on the port of Bagac, a vital point in General MacArthur's defense line.

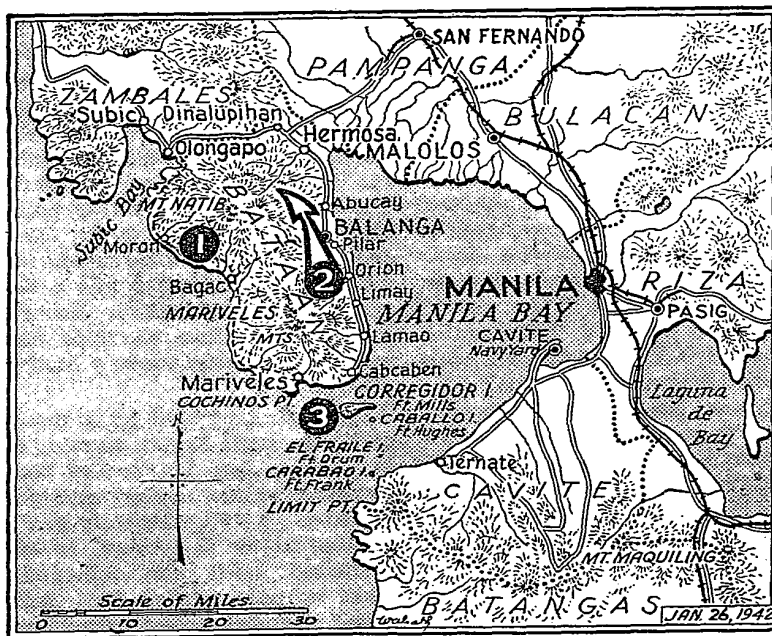
Most important, although heavy losses are being inflicted on the invader, General MacArthur's forces also are suffering heavy casualties. The Japanese, with open communication lines, can replace their cas-

ualties. The American-Filipino forces cannot.

With numerical odds estimated to be ten to one in favor of the enemy, with no protection against the Japanese naval guns, no air arm to repulse the foe's bomber attacks, and no relief in sight, the situation of General MacArthur's troops cannot be regarded as anything but desperate.

The tenor of recent War Department communiqués suggests, furthermore, that, having fought brilliant rear-guard and defensive actions, General MacArthur is confronted with a position that might at any moment become untenable.

M'ARTHUR TURNS TABLES ON FOE IN LUZON



Japanese pressure on the left flank of the Bataan defenses (1), which had been intensified after a number of landings from the China Sea and penetrations inland, was eased when the American-Filipino right flank (2) followed up a heavy artillery barrage with an infantry charge that forced the enemy to flee in confusion, leaving hundreds of dead. Tokyo, however, claimed the capture of Mount Natib (1) and Abucay (2) and again sent planes to bomb the island fortress of Corregidor (3).