

## GUERRILLAS CHECK FOE IN PHILIPPINES

**American Officers Say Japanese Will Never Be Able to Rule the Mountain Provinces**

**ONLY SMALL AREAS HELD**

**Invaders Use Manila Radio for 15 Hours of Propaganda Daily in Pleas for Surrender**

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MELBOURNE, Australia, April 25—A long supply train for Japanese troops on Luzon Island moved slowly over a mountain road between the towns of Ayangan and Bagabag one night before the battle of Bataan reached its climax.

Suddenly, out of the mountain wilds sprang a band of tough Filipino soldiers and a handful of American officers. When the battle, fought along a winding and hazardous road, had ended, the Japanese left 200 dead in the ambush and the guerrillas carried away all supplies and food that they did not destroy.

By careful planning and boldness the Filipino guerrillas were fighting the enemy at many points behind the lines before I left Bataan peninsula. On Luzon and other islands invaded by the enemy, only the coastlines or main communications routes are held by the Japanese, and these are in danger of attack at any point where the thinly spread invaders relax their guard for a moment.

American officers are convinced that the Japanese will never rule the mountain provinces, such as Nueva Vizcaya, where the enemy convoy was wiped out en route to Bagabag.

### **Japanese Were Handicapped**

Several other large guerrilla bands were operating at that time in Northern Luzon and there are probably still more in action now in the rugged Zambales mountains. Several able American officers and a number of outstanding Filipino leaders are directing and seeking to coordinate the guerrilla operations, forcing the Japanese to tie up a large number of troops on police and guard duty.

One successful raid by guerrillas heavily damaged a Japanese air field near Tuguegaro, in Cagayan, and several smaller raids on enemy bases were so effective that the Japanese apparently delayed landings on the food-rich islands of Cebu and Panay until they were in a better position to fight guerrillas. American and Filipino forces are still holding out on Panay and still more serious resistance to the enemy is expected on Cebu.

On Mindanao, the Japanese have been unable to penetrate far inland because of the wild expanse of the second largest island in the Philippines and because of strong passive resistance supplementing the guerrilla activities.

In their administration of conquered areas in the islands, the Japanese have made every possible effort to win the favor of the natives by using local officials as "fronts." Whether this was only until the fall of Bataan is not known here, but the Japanese previously had kept only a small garrison in Manila and had depended on local officials to keep order. Reports from the provinces, however, often told of ill-treatment suffered by the native population.

Japanese propaganda sometimes appeared crude, but it was believed to have played an important role in the fighting on Luzon. From mid-December until the fall of Bataan, the Japanese never tired of plastering the areas of resistance with propaganda leaflets.

Their propaganda also often reminded the Filipino soldiers of

their families and leaflets dropped on the American lines included letters allegedly from Filipino fathers to sons in the Bataan defense force.

Japanese planes dropped "surrender tickets" which purported to guarantee kindly treatment provided the soldier surrendering would come toward the Japanese lines waving a white flag and with his gun strapped over his left shoulder, muzzle pointed down and to the rear.

The Japanese used the Manila radio to feed about fifteen hours of propaganda daily to the Filipinos in English, Tagalog, Spanish and Japanese. The radio would play soft, sentimental music and read letters "from home" appealing for the troops to quit fighting.