

From San Francisco
7:45-11:10 P. M. 8.93 Mo.
8-10 P. M. 7.95 Mo.
8-10:30 A. M. 15.33 Mo.

Leyte-Samar

FREE PHILIPPINES

Published Twice a Week

Voice of Freedom
5-6:30 P. M. 7.798 Mo.
Philippine Hour
9-9:15 A. M. 15.3 Mo.
6-7 P. M. 9.616 Mo.

VOL. I

Tacloban, Leyte, Thursday, December 21, 1944

NO. 14

Board Hears 3 Witnesses For Torres

The first witnesses in behalf of Bernardo Torres, ex-governor of Leyte, were presented before the Special Board of Inquiry Tuesday at the Leyte provincial capitol in Tacloban.

Witnesses for the defense included Leocadio Lumbré, professed guerrilla secret agent, Hospicio Labata, mayor of Sogod until August, 1944, and Manuel Abesamis who testified that he was with Torres when the Japanese first occupied Tacloban.

The hearing was continued to Thursday morning.

Counsel for the prosecution concluded presentation of evidence Monday afternoon with the introduction of eleven additional documents and two new witnesses. The documents, authenticity of which was admitted by the defense, included an exchange of letters between Torres and Emilio Pundavala, Japanese-sponsored mayor of Tolosa, regarding a "gift" of seven pigs from barrios in the Tolosa district to Jose Laurel, puppet president of the Philippine Republic.

Also included among the documents were a leaflet in Visayan, signed by Torres, urging guerrilla members to surrender, and a copy of the Japanese-controlled Leyte-Samar Bulletin, dated October 1.

The final piece of evidence presented was a Japanese radio transmitter, which Torres admitted earlier had been found under his house. An American army radio expert testified that the transmitter was in working condition but lacked any power supply, and that no one without a knowledge of radio could operate the set.

Witnesses presented by the prosecution Monday were Cesar Kierulf, guerrilla member, who testified that Torres appeared with a Japanese detachment which raided the guerrilla hideout of Major Ralph Posoncuy at Carigara, November 6, 1943, and Antonio Ruiz, Barugo fisherman.

Ruiz told of a public meeting at Barugo, called in the name of General Kawazawa on June 1, 1944. At the meeting, Ruiz said, Torres made the statement that it was useless to wait for the Americans to return to the Philippines.

Final document presented in evidence by the prosecution was a memo to all Municipal Mayors in which Torres quoted a telegram from Jorge Vargas, puppet government official, proclaiming February 8 an official holiday "to give the Filipino people a chance to show their gratitude to Japan" for definite assurances of an early grant of independence.

Subs Got 33 Jap Ships; Bring Total To 907

Washington, Dec. 20—American submarines have sunk 33 more Japanese ships in Pacific and Far Eastern Patrols, the Navy Department announced Tuesday. The new sinkings included one light cruiser, three destroyers, six escort vessels, 21 cargo ships, one minesweeper, and one minelayer. This was the largest single bag of enemy ship-

Japs Face New Air Threat

MACARTHUR IS NAMED TO NEW 5-STAR RANK

A fifth star was awarded to General Douglas MacArthur this week, making him a "general of the army," newly created United States Army rank which is equivalent to field marshal in other armies.

The promotion came after Congress had passed a law allowing the naming of four five-starred generals. Previously the highest rank in the American army was general, carrying four stars with it. MacArthur's promotion was in recognition of his successful campaign against Japan, including the current drive to liberate the Philippines.

Also made "generals of the army" were Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, Air Forces Commander H. H. Arnold, and Dwight D. Eisenhower, who commands Allied Forces on the western front.

The law also allowed the appointment of four five-star admirals, to be known as "admirals of the fleet." Three were immediately appointed: Ernest J. King, chief of Naval operations; Chester W. Nimitz, commander of U. S. Pacific fleet; and William D. Leahy, chief of staff for the President. Gen. John J. Pershing, commander

GETS FIFTH STAR



GEN. DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

of the American Expeditionary Force in the first World War, retains the honorary title of "general of the armies," and is entitled to wear six stars.

Superfort Two-Way Blow Pounds Japan and Hankow

WASHINGTON Dec. 20—U. S. Super-Fortresses made two separate attacks against Japanese targets on Sunday. A task force from the 20th Bomber Command in China hit the vital communications center of Hankow in occupied China, at the same time that B-29's of the 21st Bomber Command from Saipan paid a destructive new visit to the aircraft manufacturing city of Nagoya, on Honshu.

General H. H. Arnold said "sizeable forces" participated in both attacks. Results were not released, pending compilation of complete reports.

In a dispatch from Saipan, New York Times Correspondent Tillman Durdin wrote that "after six months of operations against the Jap, the U. S. Air Force B-29 has proved itself as an airplane and as a weapon of war, and the experimental stage of its operation is over."

Sunday's attacks came six months to the day from the first B-29 strike at the Japanese homeland, when the important Yawata steel works were hit. The Super-Forts have since flown 21 full missions against Japan, exclusive of reconnaissance and intruder flights. Probably their most effective job was done in the Formosa attack Oct. 14 to 16, when in two separate strikes from China they virtually obliterated the Okayama aircraft assem-

bly and repair plant, finishing a task begun the day before by Admiral Halsey's carrier-based planes.

Durdin reported that officers of the 20th believe the second most damaging campaign by the big bombers was the series of three attacks on the Omura aircraft works on Kyushu. Sixty percent of the plant was destroyed. Japan's biggest steel plants at Yawata, and at Anshan in Manchuria, have also been heavily damaged.

Up to Dec. 15, B-29 gunners had shot down 120 enemy fighters, probably destroyed 90, and damaged 170 more. The 20th Air Force's average of enemy aircraft shot down per sortie was higher than that of any other air command, and the average monthly flying time per airplane has risen above that for heavy bombers in the European theater.

The B-29's now carry a much heavier bomb load than on their earlier missions against Japan. They now carry double the tonnage of the first Yawata attack for missions of the same distance.

Nazis Strike Counterblow

The Germans threw thousands of troops and hundreds of tanks and planes into an all-out offensive on a 60-mile front against the U. S. First Army early this week. They dented the First's lines in four places, pushing them back

U. S. Speeds Plane Base On Mindoro

General MacArthur's Headquarters, Dec. 20—General Yamashita's forces and Japan's China Sea shipping today faced the threat of Mindoro-based air attacks as American airfield construction proceeded apace on that island, protected by an infantry perimeter thrown up on commanding terrain 11 miles inland.

Caught asleep by the daring amphibious landing in the midst of its powerful Luzon and Visayan bases, the Japanese Army offered no ground opposition to the American Sixth Army troops.

Within four days of the assault, the American forces had seized nine miles of coastline, captured San Jose and its adjacent airfield five miles from the beach, and advanced six miles farther inland to the foothills of Mindoro's precipitous southern mountains.

General MacArthur announced that "our hold on the southern part of the island is now secured."

He revealed that the assault forces and airfield construction battalions were protected from serious Japanese air interference by American air cover over the beachhead and widespread neutralization raids on Jap airdromes throughout the Philippines.

From Dec. 11 to 17, at least 742 Japanese aircraft were destroyed or seriously damaged by Army and Navy planes and anti-aircraft gunners. Seventy-four of these were shot down and 11 others probably destroyed while attacking the beachhead and nearby shipping.

On Leyte, meanwhile, heavy casualties were inflicted on the remaining Jap forces early this week by four advancing American divisions.

The 77th Division, captors of Ormoc, swept 10 miles northwest from the port town, outflanked the Yamashita line and seized Valencia and its airdrome.

The Pacific veterans today were driving north along the main Ormoc-Pinamopan road toward the First Cavalry Division which smashed through two miles of Japanese pill-box defenses and cut the Yamashita line between Mt. Catabaran and Valencia. The 32nd Division, advancing south from the Leyte River, below Limon, made further substantial gains along the main road.

In the face of vicious Jap resistance, bolstered by tank-led counter-attacks, the 32nd stormed enemy positions, capturing many by hand-to-hand fighting. Large quantities of Jap ordnance, including tanks, artillery pieces, mortars and machine guns, were seized. South of Ormoc, meanwhile, remnants of the Japanese 26th Division were annihilated by mopping-up squads of the 7th Division.

From December 14 to 17, American troops buried 6,270 Japanese dead, who were killed in the offensive at the end of last week. These losses brought Japanese casualties in the Leyte-Samar campaign to a total of 88,824, an average daily loss of 1,500 men in the first 59 days of the battle.

American casualties were listed as

U. S. FILIPINO WOMEN SEW CLOTHING FOR P. I.