

Telegram, Lieutenant General Jonathan Wainwright to General George C. Marshall, May 4, 1942. On May 4, 1942, Lieutenant General Jonathan Wainwright sent General George C. Marshall this 'frank and honest' two-page telegram outlining the desperate conditions on Corregidor Island, the last American stronghold in the Philippines. Marshall passed along this grim assessment to FDR.

745 NPM
N 52
Filed 4th 1910

Radiogram

AC-4

Received at the War Department Message
Center Room 3441 Munitions Bldg. Washington, D.C.

May 4, 1942

818PM

From Ft. Mills
to General George C. Marshall

No. 907 May 4th

To be seen only by decoding clerk and General Marshall.

Reurad 1411. Hostile Air Corps has been bombing Corregidor relentlessly since March 24. Following fall of Bataan on 9 April, enemy immediately emplaced artillery on south shore of peninsula and has since then subjected our defenses to artillery fire. Beginning 29 April (Emperor's birthday) the fire of hostile artillery increased in intensity and has continued at that tempo to present date. The hostile bombing has been relatively ineffective but artillery fire from large caliber guns (240 MM) has resulted in destruction of large percentage of coast defense and beach defense artillery and small arms. Continued bombardment has resulted in about 600 casualties since April 9, and has lowered morale of troops. Morale difficult to maintain at best because troops have been constantly under or subject to air or artillery attack since December 29 and have been receiving half of poorly balanced ration since January 8. However, morale amazingly good considering conditions under which troops are now operating. Persistent reports from our operatives indicate that enemy is planning to launch an assault against Corregidor. He has prepared a large number of motor boats on which weapons are

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mounted, and has also constructed a large number of smaller boats to be used in transporting troops. I have nothing on which to base an estimate of present hostile troops strength on Luzon. However, enemy has recently taken Cebu and Panay, using about ten thousand men in each operation, and is now engaged in attack on Mindanao. I estimate that at least ten thousand are now engaged in operations on Mindanao. Unless troops have been withdrawn from the Philippines I believe that a sufficient force remains on Luzon to undertake an operation against Corregidor. Enemy forces will soon be in possession of all important areas bordering on coast of Mindanao and our troops will be confined to mountains. Thereafter enemy can clean up Visayan islands and Mindanao at leisure. In my opinion the enemy is capable of making an assault on Corregidor at any time. The success or failure of such an assault will depend entirely on steadfastness of beach defense troops. With morale at present level I estimate that we have something less than an even chance to beat off an assault. In accordance with your request I have given you a very frank and honest opinion on the situation here as I see it.

Wainwright

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Date- 8-10-71

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