

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JT

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

FROM

MANILA VIA N.R.

Dated January 7, 1941

Rec'd 2:30 p.m., 9th

Secretary of State,

Washington.

8, January 7, 10 a.m. (SECTION TWO)

Two. Dangers to be considered: (a) In the event of war inhabitants of Manila would be exposed to serious danger from bombing. The city is entirely unprepared for air raids. There is at present no antiaircraft equipment in Manila. No civilian bombproof shelters have been erected in the Philippines. In Manila district it is generally impossible to dig underground because of the low lying area of most of the city for holes dug in the ground rapidly fill with water. Such shelters as can be constructed therefore must in the main be built above ground. None has been constructed to date and, due to the cost of construction and lack of suitable materials, so far as I can ascertain such shelters will not be undertaken.

(b) There are no gas masks available for civilians in the Philippines. It seems to be impracticable to manufacture gas masks here and the cost of imported masks is too great to make it possible for the average Filipino to purchase them. Even for those Americans who might desire

to

(92)

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 11ND802116
By JW NARA Date 5-8-01

1-13-5

-2- 8, January 7, 10 a.m. (SEC TWO) from Manila

to purchase them none are available here.

(c) It is believed that fire protection in and around Manila would be quite inadequate in the case of incendiary bombs. The great majority of buildings are constructed of highly inflammable material.

(d) Manila is vulnerable with regard to water supply, power plants, and fuel supplies.

(END SECTION TWO)

SAYRE

WWC

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM

MP
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (Br)

Manila via N. R.

Dated January 7, 1941

Rec'd. 1:35 p. m., 9th

Secretary of State,

Washington

8, January 7, 10 a. m. (SECTION FIVE).

(d) In the Philippine Islands we must reckon with various disaffected groups, including important foreign elements which could not be relied upon.

(e) The smallness of the military forces defending the Philippines is also a factor constantly to be borne in mind.

(f) A study of shipping facilities in Philippine waters clearly indicates that ships available locally would be totally inadequate to handle an evacuation of Americans from the Philippines. The necessary ships would have to be procured by the Department and sent here to be used for that purpose.

In view of circumstances outlined above, it would, in event of war, be desirable to have as few nonessential Americans in the Philippines as possible. I have read this radio to the commanding general of the Philippine

Department,

DECLASSIFIED

Authority XIND802116

By JW NARA Date 5-8-01

MF -2- #8, January 7, 10 a.m. from Manila

Department, United States Army, who concurs in principle. He feels that the presence of large numbers of American civilian dependents would increase the difficulties of military defense.

I am of the opinion that at the proper time the Department should consider whether American civilian dependents are to be evacuated either from Manila area or from the Philippines and, if so, when. I strongly recommend that if in the opinion of the Department war becomes imminent an evacuation of civilian dependents be effected if feasible.

For obvious reasons I have not mentioned to Commonwealth officials the possibility of evacuation of American dependents from the Philippines. If the Department decides to advise evacuation I request that I be informed in time to approach commonwealth officials about the matter before public announcement is made. Effort must be made to minimize adverse effects upon public opinion here.

Please deliver to the President personally a copy of this telegram. END MESSAGE.

SAYRE

WWC

good stuff