

West Point Sends Her Men to War – 1942

Text: *WEST POINT SENDS HER MEN TO WAR!*

Narrator: Cadets of the United States Military Academy assemble for their first graduation of World War II. Solemn and impressive is the ceremony as the youngsters receive their commissions. Today as second lieutenants, they are ordered immediately to their regiments. For the first time in all the 140-year tradition of West Point, cadets go directly into the Air Corps, more than half the class electing to try for their wings. Its maximum wartime strength increased, the corps has representation from every state in the Union, from the territories, and from Central and South America. Gone is the light-hearted, carefree spirit of peacetime graduation. Addressing this final assembly of their cadet days, the United States Chief of Staff General George Marshall forecasts the role American troops are destined to play abroad.

General Marshall: We have our men all through the Pacific, in Burma, India, and in China. Recently, they struck at Tokyo. They have wintered in Greenland and in Iceland. They are landing in Ireland and in England. And they will land in France.

Narrator: Final regimental parade. Those who remain behind pass in review before the class of 1942, marching in perfect formation, row upon row. The cream of America's young manhood, dedicated to honor and protect those things for which America stands: freedom and democracy.

Text: *U.S. CHINESE AIR FORCE BLASTS JAPS!*

Narrator: First pictures of the famous Yankee Flying Tigers in China. For many months their bullets held open the Burma Road, beating a deadly tattoo upon the planes of Japan's air force. Former Army, Navy, Marine officers, transport pilots, they're the last of the world's soldiers of fortune. Today they're a part of America's flying forces fighting the Battle of China. Volunteering before the United States entered the war, these amazing young men have astounded the world with their deeds of heroism and daring. Their leader, 50-year-old General Claire Chennault, for five years advisor to the Chinese Air Force. His knowledge of Japanese aerial tactics he passed along to his American volunteers. Taking off on air fields literally paved by hand, the Tigers' score for their first 90 days of fighting: 470 Jap planes for 15 of the volunteers'. Fifty grinning tiger shark planes, wired together with spare parts from 50 more, were all they had to start with. Fighting in teams of two, they concentrate their firepower, one reason for their amazing success against seemingly impossible odds. General Chennault mapping the aerial raids the Japs fear above all, American Flying Tigers.

Text: *NAVY VOLUNTEERS FLOCK TO COLORS!*

Narrator: The United States cruiser *Houston*. Lost in the Battle of Java, her fighting spirit still lives in the hearts of her countrymen. The city of Houston, Texas, for which the gallant vessel was named, recruits a thousand volunteers to replace the men who went down battling an overwhelmingly superior Japanese force. Today this is the spirit that is typical of all America, a scene that is being reenacted in every town, every city, every hamlet. Taking the oath of allegiance, their battle cry "Remember the *Houston*." And behind this thousand another thousand, and thousands more to come. Here is America's answer.

Text: *MEXICO JOINS UNITED NATIONS IN WAR ON AXIS*

Narrator: Mexico City stages a giant demonstration for war. Thousands of citizens march to the capital's central plaza to urge action against the Axis. From his balcony, President Ávila Camacho views this mighty demonstration of the will of the people. All parties unite as Mexico protests against Axis sinkings of unarmed Mexican ships. Flags of the United Nations wave in the square as survivors of the first torpedoed vessel salute their dead comrades.

A man of action, Mexico's President Camacho takes his place on the rostrum before the Chamber of Deputies. He asks for a declaration of war. As radio carries his voice to the far corners of the republic, the House of Deputies and the Senate vote unanimously for active participation in the conflict. Mexico: leader of Central America, new ally in the cause of the United Nations.

Text: *U.S.S.R. GETS BRITISH TANKS VIA CONVOY!*

Narrator: These are British tanks destined for the battlefield in Russia. Light and medium armored destroyers by the trainload join to reinforce the fighting Soviet Army in that death struggle of men and machines on the Eastern Front. Outward bound, they're convoyed by warships heading for the Arctic Circle, over 2,000 miles of dangerous waters traversing the icy route that leads to Russia. Off the bleak northern tip of Norway, as the Arctic night falls, lookouts spot Nazi bombers sneaking in to attack. Pom-poms, anti-aircraft guns, blaze into action. But the convoy goes through. Help for embattled Russia in a steady stream of iron ships and iron men.

Text: *FLYING GENERALS ON ANZAC PATROL!*

Narrator: United News cameramen follow the fast-growing U.S. Army Air Corps somewhere in Australia. Powerful flying fortresses going into action as American pilots and bombardiers take off to blast Japanese concentrations pointed at the island continent. Leading the raiding party is Brigadier General Ralph Royce, chief of U.S. air operations in the South Pacific. Inside, the crew relaxes as the squadron approaches its objective. Aboard another bomber and also at the controls is General George H. Brett, commander of all United Nations air forces in the South Pacific. Winging their way over the island stronghold, these flying generals have materially checked the Japanese schedule for invasion. Today, in their able hands, lies the strategy for Australia's aerial defense. Tomorrow, the offensive.

Text: *PRESIDENT LEADS U.S. IN SALUTE TO WAR HEROES!*

Narrator: America honors her heroic dead, honors those who died in other conflicts. President Roosevelt taking the salute from his stand in front of the White House. Grim, determined fighting men, men prepared and equipped to win a modern war. Paratroops, tank corps, all the sleek and polished machinery of twentieth-century warfare, reminding the nation, telling the world, that America is on the march. All races, all colors, all creeds, taking their place on this national day of rededication. Slow to be aroused, America's vast reservoir of manpower goes into action. Advance guard of an army soon to number more than five million men. In all its 166 years of independence, the United States has never lost a war. Today America's citizens again take up their arms, a united nation on the march that civilization may endure.