

The key to the battle in the Philippines is in the air, another example of how the forces of the sky can play the decisive part in the issue of warfare on the earth below. Tonight's account from General MacArthur is dramatic indeed. Massed American war planes ^{assailed} ~~assailed~~ a powerful Jap convoy off the west coast of Leyte Island in Ormoc Bay. And the air assault meant everything to the Americans. ^{TP} The Japs have been reinforcing their troops on Leyte, ~~islands~~ reinforcing them heavily. ^{up} They had ^{narrow} been getting masses of men and equipment across the ^{narrow} waters from ~~their~~ other islands, and putting them ashore. General MacArthur has already stated that the Japs ~~had~~ succeeded in landing thirty-five thousand men, ^{and} more have been added since then. All of which put ^{an} ~~an~~ accent of top importance on the big convoy in Ormoc Bay --- ~~it was~~ ^{more} landing reinforcements. There were nineteen vessels, four big troop transports and fifteen destroyers. Obviously, ^{if} the Japs were permitted to land reinforcements

at will, ^{they'd be} ~~are~~ able to make things mighty tough for MacArthur's invasion army on Leyte Island. In fact,

The unlimited landing of ~~the~~ Japanese troops might drive the Americans out of the island, and bring MacArthur's invasion of the Philippines to a calamitous failure. This, we hear, is what the Japanese Commander Yamashito is determined to do. He's committing all ~~of~~ ~~these~~ forces to the battle on Leyte, ~~driving~~ trying to land ^{them} ~~and~~ drive MacArthur's men into the sea.

So that ~~was~~ the background for the air assault on the convoy, four transports and fifteen destroyers. Most of the Jap troops had landed, we hear, before the American war planes got in their licks -- MacArthur sending every bomber and fighter he could muster to the attack. A bitter battle resulted, plane against ship, plane against plane. The swirl of aerial combat lasted for thirty-six hours and ended in a brilliant victory for the Americans. ^P Seven of the Jap destroyers sent to the bottom, ripped apart and sunk, by American bombs.

Also three of the four big transports, and sixteen Japanese planes were shot down, Zero fighters ^{that} tried to beat off the attack. Five others were probably destroyed by the American Fighters. We lost four bombers and four Fighters.

While ^{our airmen were} ~~the air force are~~ doing their critical job of wrecking the landing convoy, the ground troops, whom they were aiding, ^{were} ~~are~~ engaged in equally bitter conflict. The key to ~~it~~ it all was a hill with a number for a name -- Hill 1525. It was captured by the Americans yesterday and today was the scene of some of the bitterest fighting in the Pacific ^{as} the powerfully reinforced Japs charged up ~~the hill~~ to recapture Hill 1525. -- That eminence of land is a dominating point in the battle ^{plan} ~~plan~~ before Ormoc -- the one remaining Japanese base on the island. ^R Yamashito we hear, is using every ounce of power he can muster to keep MacArthur from capturing Ormoc and thereby completing the conquest of Leyte; and Hill 1525 is the key of it all -- as savage a tropical battlefield of

crag and jungles ~~that~~ this Pacific war has known. But meanwhile, no matter what happens, on that hill, the key to it all is high above ⁱⁿ the air. It's up to the American forces of the skies to break the line of Japanese reinforcements to Leyte and stop the enemy from pouring in troops.

In The great air battles ^{that} have been waged ~~and~~ we hear ^{a syllable} ~~a~~ ^{an} that has the sound of ^{an} oriental bell:--
Bong!

Rather like a sound of a Asiatic gong -- Bong!

Well, that top ranking American ace, Major Richard Bong, of Poplar, Wisconsin has run his score up to thirty-four. Flying and fighting in the air battles of the Philippines invasion, Bong has shot down four thus far -- one today.

The fighter pilots out there say that ~~the~~ Japanese antagonists in the air are better than those they encountered previously. Major Thomas Maguire, of Ridgewood, New Jersey, who has shot down twenty-five planes, puts it this way, "These Japs have a lot more

guts ~~them~~ and are more brisk and corageous." And he added, ~~and~~ "the planes are better, they don't burn so easily, you've got to knock 'em down". ^R All of which means that enemy Commander Yamashito, in addition to committing his ^{ground} ~~area~~ forces to a decisive battle on Leyte, is sending in the best of the Jap pilots and planes for the ⁻⁴ critical struggle in the air.

Over in England scientists for weeks have been studying ^a~~the~~ thing not revealed to the world until today -- the V-2, that rocket projectile which falls from the stratosphere like a comet. The v-2, as we now know, has been hitting Britain since mid-October. Prime Minister Churchill disclosed the fact today in Parliament, the Germans having announced ~~the fact~~ ^{it} day before yesterday.

Why the Nazis were so secretive about it, we can only guess, but the British reasons for concealment are apparent. One authority in London said today that previously the Germans had to guess whether their robot planes, the V-1, ^{were} ~~were~~ hitting London. And now they ^{to} ~~had~~ wonder whether the V-2s were hitting Britain -- the stratospheric projectiles being so ~~ex~~ uncertain of aim.

Some, in fact, are said to have missed the island of Britain altogether, and fallen into the sea, while others exploded in the air. ~~But~~ ~~the British~~ kept still, giving the Germans no hint of

where the V-2s were falling -- whether they were hitting Britain at all.

The British motives for secrecy were so great that, we are told, Churchill held a Cabinet meeting to decide upon the question of whether or not to make public at this time the fact that rockets had landed in Britain. And the decision was -- yes, because of the world-wide talk and discussion.

During the weeks of secrecy British scientists were studying the V-2, and today they present an alarming picture for the future -- a ~~re~~ prospect fantastic and inhuman for future wars, if any. It is conceded that the rockets the Germans are now ~~re~~ hurling to Britain are nothing to cause any great alarm -- not in their present form. They are not much larger than the buzz bomb^s, with the V-1, which raised so much havoc in London. The charge of explosive is the same, one ton. A larger load of destruction being impossible because

of the amount of fuel it takes to propel a rocket up into the stratosphere. It is driven by explosions of liquid oxygen and alcohol. ^{TP} ~~The V-2, rushing down with terrific speed from the stratosphere, digs in deeply before exploding, and consequently its radius of destruction is less, though more violent and devastating in the immediate neighborhood.~~ The Germans hurl ^{these rockets} ~~these~~ upward into the high stratosphere, sixty or seventy miles aloft, and they come down at a speed greater than the speed of sound. Thus, they can't be heard-- the V-2 travelling faster than the sound waves it sets up. ~~We are told that this makes them less terrifying than the buzz bombs, with their infernal shrieking-- the sound of the robot plane being a strain on human nerves.~~ ^{TP} ~~At the same time,~~ ^{TP} There is no defense against the V-2 -- except the destruction or seizure of the bases from which they are launched, or the conquest of the enemy that hurls them. ~~The robot planes, with their comparatively moderate speed, can be knocked out~~

~~by fast fighter planes, or shot down by anti-aircraft fire. But the v-2, rushing out of the stratosphere like a comet, is too fast for anything like that.~~

Sizing up the whole thing, the London verdict is that the V-2 is not nearly as devastating an affair as ~~max~~ the buzz bombs. The British scientists point to the potentialities -- not in this war, but in the future. The V-2 was developed by German scientists during the present conflict, work on the rockets having been started in Nineteen Forty-two' -- we are told. And the point is made that, if the German technicians could devise such a terror weapon with their backs against the wall -- their plants and laboratories under the tremendous Allied bombing of the past couple of years -- what could they not do under more favorable conditions?

~~The answer would surely seem to be that scientists, with a few quiet years of experiment and research in normal circumstances, will turn out a stratosphere rocket that will make the present V-2 seem like a harmless toy.~~

~~And~~ British scientists today are forseeing a new kind of

war -- with giant rockets as one of the most formidable of weapons. ^{TP} They say the range of the stratospheric projectiles will increase so greatly that the rocket ^{will} ~~can~~ become a weapon of intercontinental warfare -- one continent hitting at another across oceans. They foresee a time when declarations of war will be made in terms of annihilating showers of missiles from the stratosphere, a sudden rain of destruction smashing ~~nations~~ major cities. ^{TP} "Such an attack," says today's dispatch from London, "might make the Pearl Harbor sneak punch seem like the pounding of Indian war drums before battle."

^{TP} British technicians reason that ^{while} for the present, the V-2 is grossly inaccurate, ^{the} aiming of rockets can be improved. Probably they'll never be able to pinpoint the target like modern bombers -- but they'll be used in showers. They'll be launched ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ patterns, in such fashion as to do enormous damage. ^{TP} Such is the alarming picture for the future presented by British scientists today -- as Churchill reveals the V-2 assault on Britain.

Another kind of picture is painted by a newspaperman who was nearby when a V-2 hit. United Press Correspondent Cyril Winch was walking along ~~the~~ street, and here's how he describes what occurred:

"Everything happened at once," he cables, "timber, glass, soot, thick clay, plaster, and pieces of roof-slating, all seemed to hit me at the same time. Along with the shower came a shuddering vibration of the earth and a noise unlike anything I had ever heard. I fought hard to keep my feet, but ^{And} the blast was too strong. [^] It took a hard shake of the head," he says, "to get that deafening thunder out of my ears. I had to feel myself to see if I was still in one piece."

Later stories from London had added to the weirdness of the projectiles that flashed down like comets from out of space. One story relates that a fragment of a rocket they found, was covered with ice -- after it's descent from the dismal cold of a stratosphere where the atmosphere merges into planetary space. ^{TP} One eye witness declares that the V-2 flashes down like a great ball of fire. Another describes the descent of the rocket by saying in the words of the dispatch: "It was as if some one had drawn a luminous pencil line from the sky to the horizon".

^{TP} A survivor of a[^] explosion said that the burst of the rocket was proceeded by a bright yellow flash; but most survivors say they knew nothing until the ceiling began to fall down. Still ^{other} ~~xxxxxxx~~ ear-witnesses add weird details, that after the explosion they heard a gigantic sign, or ~~shish~~ swishing sound that came after the burst as ~~xxx~~ if the swishing sigh was the noise of the descent of the ~~xxxx~~ rocket just catching up to the projectile that travels faster than sound.

SUBSTITUTE LEAD WESTERN FRONT

On the Western Front, American troops have ripped a fifteen mile gap in the German line below Metz. With this newest advance ^{they} ~~there~~ are now within sixteen miles of having Metz encircled p--- and one of their major objectives is to surround and capture that historic fortress. that's at the northern end of the plain along which General Patton's Third Army is driving. They are now within two and a half miles of the German frontier.

WESTERN FRONT

Tonight the troops of Lieutenant General Patton are within two and a half miles of the German frontier. That's at the northern end of the line along which the Third Army is driving -- the sector of Metz. And Patton's troops are now within ~~seventeen~~ miles of having Metz encircled. One of their major objectives is to surround and capture the historic fortress. ~~It is believed to be a 15 mile gap in the German line below Metz.~~

~~At the southern end of the Third Army front~~
~~advancing American troops captured a stronghold called~~
~~Chateau-Salins. These are the salient facts of a~~
~~general push forward in which~~ Patton's troops today hammered ahead with gains all along the line. In three days of the present offensive the Third Army front has moved forward for twelve miles -- on its way to the German frontier, especially the Saar Valley, one of the most important industrial areas of the land of the Nazis.

Patton has thrown into the battle ^{six} ~~six~~ infantry divisions and two armored divisions, and probably a total of one hundred thousand American troops are on the march. The weather is bad, with rainy skies and water-soaked earth, and at one time today a blinding snowstorm swept across ~~the~~ valley held by a force of American tanks.

RUSSIA

In Hungary, Soviet forces scored an important success, when they cut one of the major railroad lines, out of Budapest, the line linking the Hungarian capital with eastern Slovakia. And, at the same time, Red Army troops widened their bridgehead across the Tisza River, the main line of German defense, ^{being} along that stream. ^T Today's news dispatch refers to what it calls "rain sodden plains". Another indication of bad weather all over Europe.

CONFERENCE

Rumors persist of another Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin conference. The London Daily Express declares today that the Soviet Premier has been asked to come to London to talk things over with Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt. Stalin has not yet agreed, but he has not refused, states the British newspaper.

PHILIPPINES

Events in the Philippines are moving toward a great battle -- probably a decisive battle -- so far as the island of Leyte is concerned. The Japs are continuing to land more troops and are reported to have put thirty-five thousand ashore -- in an attempt to stop the American invasion. ~~They're~~ ^{getting} their soldiers across from neighboring islands despite incessant attacks by American PT boats and fighter planes. ~~The Japs report~~ ^{for} The Americans are pushing forward [^] to the clash, slogging their way through mountain passes ~~that~~ ^{that} are swept by heavy rainstorms. It's been typhoon weather out there in the Philippines and mountain slopes and jungle are a slushy morass -- as military events develop for a major battle between MacArthur's troops and the heavy Japanese reinforcements that enemy Commander Yamashita has been able to land.

The latest - word of the sinking of 7 Jap destroyers and 3 large troop transports - off Leyte. Our planes caught a 19 ship convoi, with reinforcements - & smashed it. setting seven destroyers.

CHINA

The Japanese claim the capture of the important cities of Kweilin and Liuchow --- both of which were sites of American air bases. We've known for days that the Japs were closing in on Kweilin and Liuchow; ^{and} now Tokio reports ~~that Japanese troops have stormed~~ ^{the} storming of the two cities. If the claim ~~is~~ true, the enemy has gained one of ~~his~~ largest victories in the China war-- virtually accomplished ~~his~~ purpose of cutting China in two.

— 0 —
Hugh, before we go on to one of the super-thrill stories of the war, let's hear from St. A.C.!

ELECTION

The election figures, almost complete now, bear out the predictions that President Roosevelt would have a popular majority of about three million.

~~Today's latest figures show: F.B.R.: twenty-four million, three hundred and eighty-one thousand; Dewey: twenty-one million, two hundred and ninety thousand. The Roosevelt majority being three million, ninety-one thousand.~~

~~One curiosity of the election has been the mistakes that were made in the counting of the votes. For example, in New York State a re-check shows that there was an error of fifty-five thousand in Lewis County. ~~It was~~ Through a mistake of tabulation, Governor Dewey was credited with ~~sixty~~ fifty-five thousand votes that he didn't get. And this raises the President's New York State majority to three hundred and sixteen thousand.~~

^a More picturesque was a blunder made in Minnesota, where ten thousand votes were given to the

wrong candidate. This was discovered today, and as a result, one of the most astonished men in this country is a former Minneapolis street sweeper. He was a *Farmer-Labor candidate,* Democratic ~~candidate for Congress~~ and was entirely convinced that he had been defeated in the election -- only to find now, with the discovery of the ten thousand vote error, that he's a member of Congress.

For many years William J. Gallagher, sixty-nine years old, was a classic example of disappointed political ambition. His brand of politics goes ^{way}/~~back~~ to the Nineteenth Century era of Henry George, of the Single Tax doctrine -- the ~~almost~~ forgotten agitation of a bygone time.

The newly elected Congressman said today:

"I've been politically minded ever since I got out of high school back in the Nineties. I worked for a while as an ~~admix~~ editorial proof reader for the National Single-Taxer." That, he explains, "was a magazine published in Minnesota then." And he adds: "I am still a Henry George man. I'm a single-taxer."

He ran for office repeatedly, but was never successful. He was defeated for State Representative three times. ~~On one occasion he was nominated by the Democrats for Congress, but withdrew in favor of the Farmer Labor candidate. And at one time he was President of the Third Ward Democratic Club.~~

Meanwhile, by way of making a living, Gallagher worked as a laborer and a handyman at freight stations. And then he became a street sweeper -- an employee of the Minneapolis street-cleaning department. ~~But~~ After years of this he was retired on a pension of \$25.84 a month. He still did some work -- as a janitor, ~~with~~ ^{was} his wife working too -- as a chocolate dipper in a candy factory. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ ^{TP} In the recent campaign the sixty-nine year old veteran of political disappointment won the nomination to Congress on a Democratic-Farmer-Labor ticket.

And now, after the discovery of a vote-counting error, he finds himself ~~elected~~ a lawmaker in the legislative halls of Congress. *And his wife is going to give up candy dipping.*

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt today had the same luck with the weather that he had during the campaign. Bad weather -- but you could hardly call it bad luck. ^{TP} Everyone will recall what happened when the President made his first big public campaign appearance, a long automobile tour through the burroughs of New York. ~~In an open car, he was nearly drenched -- and so were the millions who lined the many miles of streets in the teeming downpour. Worse weather could hardly have been imagined --~~

The tail end of a West Indian hurricane sweeping with sheets of rain, for the presidential tour!

Days later it was almost the same story in Philadelphia -- through which city the President drove ~~at~~ amid ~~show~~ers of wind-driven rain and flurried ^S_A of snow.

Today the President returned to Washington, and made a triumphal automobile trip from Union Station along Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. The weather had been bad all morning, and just as F.D.R. emerged from the station a huge black cloud drifted over Washington, It grew so dark that the chauffeurs of the

official automobiles switched on their headlights.

The President gave a short address, and in the middle

of it the rain came roaring down. He took it in

~~jocular mood, and flung a quip at newspaper men, saying:~~

~~"I hope it won't be intimated that I hope to make~~

~~Washington my permanent residence for the rest of my~~

~~life."~~

Then the drive to the White House -- through the rain, and the President -- drenched. With him, Vice President Wallace and Vice-President-elect Truman -- water-soaked. The crowds lining Pennsylvania Avenue ^{to} welcomed the homecoming Chief Executive -- they were dripping wet. ^{TR} People were reminded of the first F.D.R. inauguration, when he became President in Nineteen Thirty-three. The Inaugural was almost drowned out by one of the heaviest rainstorms that Washington had ever seen. ^{TR} Dripping skies are a constant theme in the F.D.R. career, Roosevelt luck with the weather -- bad weather, but not bad luck.

Indoors at the White House, everybody being thankfully out of the rain, the re-elected President promptly held a news conference. It was a jolly bantering affair. ^{TR} F.D.R. was asked about his guess, long before Election Day, of the electoral vote he'd get. -- In all of his presidential campaigns he jots down a prognostication.

~~(How correct had he been this time -- the newsmen asked?~~

~~He couldn't remember the guess, and had to fish around,~~

~~for a yellow slip on which he had jotted down the~~

~~figures. The yellow slip disclosed that the F.D.R.~~

~~prediction had been away off.)~~ He had marked down three

hundred and thirty-five electoral votes for himself, and

one hundred and ninety-six for Governor Dewey. As we

Of course it turned out
~~know, the F.D.R. electoral vote victory is~~ much larger

than that -- four hundred and thirty-two to ninety-nine,

~~according to the latest and almost complete figure. --~~

~~Michigan having switched from Dewey to Roosevelt by a~~

~~few thousand votes in the latest tally of ballots.~~

There was some nondescript questioning and answering, and then the news conference ended on an appropriate note, -- and a big laugh.

One White House correspondent said to the President with solemn formality: "Let me be the first to ask if you are going to run in Nineteen Forty-eight."

The President shouted with laughter, and exclaimed -- "the same old question!"

— 0 —

And now H —