

LEAD

C.I. - Standard. Tuesday, Oct. 24, 1944.
Sunoco.

The latest from the Pacific strengthens the belief that a mighty sea battle may be raging. Vice-Admiral Towers, Deputy to Admiral Nimitz, states: "We have every reason to believe that a major fleet engagement with the enemy may be in progress right now -- and that the most critical moment in our history is this moment".

Earlier we had Admiral Nimitz' dramatic communique - and that was a thing to send people running to the map. Nimitz related that a powerful Jap fleet had been cited moving eastward through the Sulu Sea and the Sibuyan Sea. Which may sound a lot like Greek or Filipino to many of us, but it takes only one glance at the ^{map} ~~map~~ to grasp the tense meaning of the Nimitz dispatch.

A general view of the Philippines shows how the archipelago consists of two major islands -- Luzon to the north, and Mindanao to the South. Between Luzon and Mindanao there is a large space occupied by a maze of smaller islands, with ramifications of

inland seas and gulfs.

To the west of Mindanao is a great space of water ~~is~~ called the Sulu Sea, and this, according to the Nimitz dispatch, the Japs entered, moving eastward. Continuing in that direction the enemy steamed through narrow waters into an inland sea -- Sibuyan, which is ringed with islands. Continuing eastward, and crossing Sibuyan Sea, would take the Japs to the island at its eastern margin. And that island is Leyte -- which the Americans have invaded.

The geography suggests luminously that the Japanese fleet, continuing eastward, may plan to strike at the MacArthur invasion -- which, of course, will bring about a ~~xxx~~ major battle with Admiral Halsey's powerful American fleet.

Do the Japs mean business this time? On the last occasion the Mikado's fleet appeared it took a look, and then prudently retired. This time, however, the Japs appear to be bolder. They've come in close enough to be assailed by American carrier-

based planes. Admiral Nimitz states that planes from Halsey's fleet have been launching attacks against the Jap naval force, which includes cruisers and battleships. In other words, the moment the enemy fleet was spotted eastward through the Sulu Sea and into Sibuyan Sea, Halsey threw his carrier-based planes against it.

It isn't clear what the Japs are up to. They may try to land reinforcements on Leyte Island. Presumably Halsey's fleet is on the outside of Sibuyan Sea, out in the open ocean to the East of Leyte, and it isn't clear whether the American warships could traverse the Channel between ^{the} islands and get into Sibuyan Sea. Nor would it seem probable that the Japs would try to proceed out of that sea to the East, moving through narrow channels. The whole thing may turn out to be one of those affairs of planes against ships, with Halsey throwing his air power through the sky spaces over the islands for blows against the enemy inside ~~of~~ the inland sea, as he has already begun to do.

However, there may be a giant clash between the warships themselves, fighting it out with guns as well as planes. The Japs may figure ~~in~~ that they have great advantages, as they have -- fighting in the neighborhood of Japanese land air bases, under the protection of land planes -- although Halsey's carrier based ~~px~~ planes have thus far shown themselves to be more than a match for the air-based planes of the Japs.

It isn't clear whether any of the flying fields that MacArthur has captured on Leyte Island are in operation. All we have heard is that light reconnaissance ~~pxx~~ planes, piper cubs, have been flying from them.

In addition to the air factor, Halsey's warships have mighty long communication lines, way across the Pacific, and they've been constantly at sea and in action for weeks -- all advantages for the Japs if there should be a full dress naval battle between these warships. However, the mighty

American armadas in the Pacific have been boldly defying the Jap at the entrance to his own backyard, and seem able to smash anything he can throw against them in the waters of the Philippines.

Momentous news, indeed, and we are all sitting on the edges of our chairs eager for further word.

Earlier ^{today our troops were} ~~American troops are~~ reported to have

landed on Samar, in the Philippines. Samar is just across the narrow strait from the invaded island of Leyte, and the landing there is a logical thing. It ~~is~~ gives the American forces full command of one of the channels of the maze of waterways that intersect the ~~map~~^{map} of islands in the central Philippines.

On Leyte, ~~itself~~ the Americans have driven to within twenty-five miles of the west coast. They landed on the east coast, and so they have gone a large part of the way across - in a drive to cut the long narrow island in two. Japanese resistance is said to be weakening, ~~with~~ the enemy ~~is~~ losing ten to one in casualties.

Altogether, the invasion of Leyte is proceeding in a manner highly satisfactory to General MacArthur and his officers, although there is the usual fight to the death with the Jap amid the now familiar jungles of the tropical Pacific.

One striking disclosure today concerns the doings of Philippine patriot forces battling the Japs. We have known, of course, ever since the heroic days of Bataan, how loyal the people of the islands are to the American cause and to the freedom the United States has given them. Now, this is illustrated by new dramatic stories - telling of an organized Philippine guerrilla army of four thousand men, ~~which is~~ fighting to join forces with the Americans. ~~It is~~ led by a fifty-five year old officer, Colonel Kengelon, who served in the Philippine ~~constabulary, of the United States~~ ^{with us, for} ~~army staff~~ twenty-eight years. His second in command is an American, a former skipper of a Navy P.T. Boat.

The Partisan Bands, armed with captured Japanese weapons, ancient rifles and their own native Bolos, fought the Japs and scouted for information - information ~~which~~ they passed along to the American Command in the Pacific. By secret channels, the Guerrillas kept contact with our

Forces, and provided MacArthur's Officers with detailed information for the Invasion of Leyte. In Return they were given a schedule of American operations in advance of the landings. This enabled them to get civilians out of the way, get their own people out of the Battle Zone.

As a climax to all this arranging, there was a great adventure - an adventure by two American Army Officers who went ashore on Japanese-controlled Leyte, and met the Philippine Guerrillas for a conference.

— o —
So much for the all-important Pacific War. Now your message, Hugh, and then more news.

— in Europe —

The flare of action [^] on the Western Front was in Holland today, where British troops fought their way to the city of Hertogenbosch. Other units drove past the city, with advances up to five miles.

This is the sector where the British are threatening to cut the escape route of some sixty thousand Germans in Western Holland - along the complicated coast with its peninsulas and inlets of the sea. At some points the Germans holding the escape route are fighting obstinately, but at the key city of Hertogenbosch, resistance is weakening. It would appear that the enemy has no heavy armored force there, and the front around the town looks as if it might collapse. The country is a dreary wintry scene, with medieval Hertogenbosch standing among vast expansive marshes. These, say ^{our men,} ~~Americans,~~ look like American wild duck country; - now a battlefield.

FOLLOW WESTERN FRONT

The bitterness of the fight the Germans are putting up is pictured graphically in a dispatch today from United Press Correspondent Collie Small, *who* ~~is~~ is with General Patton's Third Army. ~~He~~ tells of a seventeen day battle for a small town five miles north of Metz; - seventeen days of house-to-house fighting, and the town is not taken yet. The conflict is concentrated at the intersection of its principal streets, where American Troops under Lieutenant Colonel John Mason of West Los Angeles, California, are trying to capture the stubbornly defended City Hall.

So literally is it house-to-house fighting, that the War Correspondent cables: "The present objective is a combination schoolhouse-City Hall. Tomorrow, he goes on, "It will probably be the gymnasium next door. It looks like there will be a battle for the Hardware Store the day after that, and then another fight for the Shoe Shop and Barber Shop

across the street. "The Germans are fighting so stubbornly," he adds, "that Colonel Mason has instituted a quota system under which each company is given a certain number of houses to capture in each attack, after which they receive a well earned rest."

It was in this kind of hard slow-going battle that General Patch's son was killed, Captain Alexander Patch, Third, only son of the Commander of the American Seventh Army. He was leading his Infantry Company to an attack, when a shell from a German Tank exploded. And today his funeral was held, attended by his father and the Seventh Army Staff.

From the fighting front we have a statement that the fanatical bitter-end resistance of the Germans is being inspired by talk back in the United States - talk of a harsh and relentless peace to be inflicted on defeated Germany. This is reported by United Press Correspondent Robert Richards, who explains that every

time somebody at home advocated ^S~~A~~ a more drastic treatment for Germany, the Nazi Propaganda picks it up and exploits it - to make the German Soldiers fight

harder. As a result, German Troops, who were previously in a mood to surrender, change their minds and fight it out to the bitter end.

The Newspaper Correspondent cables: "Sometimes the American Doughboys who are fighting and dying in the constant mud, wish the people back home would quit announcing what they think must be done with Germany."

The resentment of the G.I.'s is illustrated by things learned from German Prisoners, who are questioned in an effort to get an explanation of the stubborn and suicidal defense. Prisoners brought in during the past three days have been mentioning several things - like the following:

Nazi Propaganda circulated what purported to be a clipping from an American Newspaper, a story

telling about books of American-German phrases, which were to have been issued to American Soldiers. But sixty thousand of the phrase books were withdrawn, because the phrases were - "Too friendly." The alleged clipping was accompanied by one single Nazi Propaganda notation: "They want to hate you and they want you to hate them."

And then the German Prisoners speak constantly of that much talked about - "Morgenthau Plan." Over here there has been a lot of mystification concerning the treatment for defeated Germany said to be advocated by the Secretary of the Treasury and presented at the recent Roosevelt-Churchill Meeting. Actually, little is known about what is called the "Morgenthau Plan," But the most prominent report *it was to the effect that* has been that German Industry would be abolished and the Germans reduced to a nation of farmers. This, the prisoners say, was taken up in a big way by the Nazi Propaganda, and has stiffened the morale of German Troops in the fighting

lines. The United Press Correspondent reports that Prisoners of War are constantly asking the American Soldiers about the Morgenthau Plan, trying to find out some more about it, seeking an explanation of how it would work. It's ^Peasy to understand the obfuscation of the American soldier at the Front, who probably never heard about the Morgenthau Plan.

RUSSIA

27
The Russians have captured the ~~grd~~ great fortress of Augustow (the w is pronounced like a v) This is one of the major strongholds guarding the southeastern approaches to East Prussia.

Further on, Red Army troops, which have pushed into East Prussia, have ~~ex~~ captured several strong points in that province - this announced by Moscow.

WAR PREPARATION

There is more argument today in the controversy about why this country was so unprepared for war.

Congressman Engel of Michigan denies the charge that Congress refused to arm the Nation. And to support this he brings forward a report made in nineteen thirty-seven by the United States Military Attache in Berlin.

Transmitting confidential information to Washington, Military Attache Major Truman Smith stated the following: "The astounding growth of German Air Power from a zero level to its present status, in a brief four years, must be accounted one of the most important events of our time." And, *in* *addition* to this Major Truman Smith predicted that other countries would receive, what he called - "A rude awakening in the not too distant future." *TP* To support his contention, he gave detailed figures for the formidable air power built so swiftly by Nazi Germany.

8

But this report, charges Congressman Engel, was never presented to Congress. *He* declares that the President withheld from Congress insistent warnings about the ominous growth of Nazi War Power. *And*, at the same time, the white House reduced the amounts of money that the War Department said would be needed for the Army. So says the Congressman, and he gives figures - claiming that from nineteen thirty-five to nineteen forty-one, the White House cut War Department appropriations by eight hundred and thirty-three million dollars, and that Congress put up two hundred and fifty-three million dollars more for the Army than the white House asked.

— 0 —
Now H — back to you.

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt is going to make a campaign speech in Chicago - so announces the White House. (we are not told what the date will be, but it is noted that the Chicago Democrats will hold a big Rally at Soldiers field on Saturday - and maybe the President will appear at that.) He is scheduled for a campaign address in Philadelphia on Friday night, and perhaps he will go right on to Chicago.

1/2
The President is scheduled for a speech at Boston on November fourth, and there are reports that he will also appear in Cleveland and Detroit - all of which would build up the Presidential reelection campaign to large proportions.

The appearance in Chicago will be the farthest trip west that the President has made in any campaign since nineteen thirty-six. In nineteen forty he went only as far west as Cleveland. And now - Chicago.

9
And now back to you Hugh.

MRS. ROOSEVELT

I don't know if anybody will want to criticize Mrs. Roosevelt for what she said today - But if so, go ahead. ^{The} First Lady, herself, says it's quite all right to criticize her - she doesn't mind. She declares that criticism of the President's wife is entirely permissible.

This appears today in an article she wrote for the Ladies Home Journal, an article entitled - "How to take criticism." Mrs. Roosevelt explains that she would rather do things and be criticized, than to live the life of a Dresden China Doll on a mantelpiece. Well, I too, would hate to be a Dresden China Doll, - ~~But then nobody ever gave me the chance. I suppose they figured I would look better as~~ ^{or even} a wooden Indian, in front of a Cigar Store.

Mrs. Roosevelt intimates that she has had a lot of criticism, ^{which she reads,} ~~she doesn't ignore it, doesn't give unfriendly remarks the go by. Quite to the contrary. She reads the criticisms of herself -~~ "Even," she says, "The unkind and untrue ones." She explains that

studying the criticisms helps to keep her from becoming over-confident and to avoid - "What is known," says she, "is a swell head."

Coinciding with the appearance of her article about criticism, the First Lady today held a press conference in Washington, and spoke her mind on subjects connected with the Political Campaign. She said, for example, that in her belief the Fourth Team is less an issue today than the Third Term was four years ago. ~~She thinks people were more concerned about a Third Term, than they are about a Fourth. Also she thought Senator Ball of Minnesota was, as she said, "Courageous" in coming out for the reelection of the President instead of supporting his own Party's Nominee, Governor Dewey.~~

Then the First Lady got around to an angle that combined Politics with Home Sweet Home. She spoke about how the President felt, after his long trip through the chilly rain in New York last Saturday,

~~driving through the downpour in an open car and~~
getting soaking wet. The discussion had something of
the good old domestic flavor of wifie telling about
hubby's hunting trip when he got caught in a blizzard,
but after warming up by the fire with a pot of hot
tea and plenty of flannels, he was okay.

The First Lady said that the President's
tour in the rain actually did him good. It didn't
bother him physically, she explained, and it was a
benefit because it had been a long time since he had
been, as the First Lady said "In contact with real
crowds, always stimulating to him."

And that wasn't all - there was Fala. That
most famous of dogs was in the Presidential car during
the trip in the rain, and provided the President
with what Mrs. Roosevelt today called - "The greatest
joy." Why? Because Fala stood at attention while the
bands played the Star Spangled Banner. Not exactly
at attention in a strictly military sense - with one

paw at salute, but it was almost that good.

Mrs. Roosevelt said it happened twice - once at the Army Supply Depot in Brooklyn and again at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. On each occasion Fala was on the rear seat of the automobile and when the band struck up the National Anthem, the fuzzy black Scottie jumped up, put his paws on the back of the front seat, and stood rigid until the last majestic bar of the Star Spangled Banner. ~~"O'er the Land of the free, and the home of the brave."~~

The First Lady indicated that he was not so sure about Fala's patriotic emotion. Do dogs experience lofty fires of patriotism, except maybe for a kennel or a bone? She said she guessed that Fala stood at

attention because he saw that everybody else did. - or

because he thought it the doggy thing to do at that juncture!

Well, if you want to criticize anything the

First Lady said today - go right ahead. You have her

full permission. - ~~only it would be tough to be given~~

And now H - will you go right ahead. You have my full permission.

~~permission, and then not find anything to criticize.~~

LEAD

It looks as if the long expected naval battle may have begun -- with a bulletin telling us only a few minutes ago that the Japanese fleet is out, and in striking distance of our own warships. Admiral Nimitz informs us that contact has been made with American carrier¹²⁻ based planes attacking a powerful Jap naval unit west of the Philippines. The enemy fleet consists of cruisers and battleships. The scene of the engagement is to the north of the Sulu Sea in waters not far from the island with that well known name -- Panay. The ~~XXXXXX~~ area is almost due west of Leyte which our forces have invaded -- just across the island.