

major forces before the Americans could use airfields on Leyte for land-based bombers, and while Leyte Gulf was still full of transports supplying the initial disembarkation. Several naval correspondents writing in the press have described the Japanese order of battle as strategically inept, because it involved the use of three widely separated forces, but there seems more reason to agree with the judgment of the Dutch Rear-Admiral Koenraad that it was "well-timed and ingenious, though risky." The plan apparently was for a squadron consisting partly of aircraft-carriers to divert the American Third Fleet by a move from Formosan waters, while two other squadrons without carriers, and relying on protection by shore-based aircraft, advanced through the enclosed seas of the central Philippines and fell upon the Seventh Fleet which was covering the landing on Leyte. The greatest capital ship strength was put into the middle squadron, which passed through the Sibuyan Sea and out by the San Bernardino Strait to the north of Samar; this comprised five battleships, including two of the heaviest class, while the other squadrons had two battleships each. The miscarriage of the plan was mainly due to the speed and violence with which Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet attacked the squadron from Formosa; he achieved a decisive victory over this with his carrier-borne aircraft and was then able to reinforce the Seventh Fleet before the Japanese middle squadron was able to achieve a decisive result; meanwhile the southern squadron had been defeated in a night action in the Surigao Strait to the south of Leyte and had failed to reach the American transports in the Leyte Gulf.

That the result of these engagements was an American victory is clear; what is not so clear is how much strength the Japanese Navy retains after the encounter. The estimation of enemy losses is a matter of great difficulty in a battle such as this in which most of the action consisted either of remote aircraft attacks, or of night fighting by surface ships, and a certain suspense of judgment is particularly necessary with regard to the night battle in the Surigao Strait because of the remarkable discrepancies in the reports of the original strength of the Japanese squadron engaged. In the communiqué issued by Admiral Nimitz on the 25th October the force sighted in the Sulu Sea was stated to have consisted of 2 battleships, 1 cruiser and 4 destroyers. A correspondent on Admiral Barby's flagship after the battle said it had consisted of 2 battleships, 2 cruisers and 4 destroyers. Admiral Nimitz's communiqué of the 29th, however, put it at 2 battleships, 4 cruisers and 7 or 8 destroyers, while General MacArthur increased the figure to 2 battleships, 4 cruisers and 10 destroyers, all of which he claimed had been sunk.

The broadcast speech of Navy Secretary Forrestal on the 26th October showed a certain anxiety lest the tidal wave of victory publicity should cause the American public to think that the naval war in the Pacific was already "in the bag." He warned the public that Japan still had a fleet, and that damaged ships could be repaired, and added a reminder that "we too have lost ships and had others damaged." Rear-Admiral Koenraad, who formerly commanded the Dutch naval base at Soerabaya, also sounded a note of warning, calling attention to Japan's residue of battleship strength. The situation as regards capital ships appears to be that, having lost 3 old battleships, believed to be the *Mutsu*, *Hiyei* and *Kirishima*, Japan had before last week's battle 7 others of her old list, plus 2 of the 40,000-ton class recently put into commission. All of these took part in the Philippines battle; 2 of the old list, the *Fuso* and *Yamashiro*, are claimed to have been sunk, and all the rest to have sustained damage, but it cannot be assumed that any of the latter are out of action for long.

The Japanese have resolutely declined to admit that they were beaten in the Philippines battles, but their claims have been unusually modest and their admissions considerable. They have admitted 1 battleship (unnamed) sunk and another "substantially damaged," 1 aircraft-carrier and 2 cruisers sunk; they have not this time claimed the sinking of any American battleship, though they have been less modest with aircraft-carriers of which they have claimed 8 (3 being the correct figure). They have not been able to deny that the American fleet continues to sail the waters east of the Philippines, or that American fleet remain on Leyte, though they speak of them as being "marooned" there. The Philippines campaign is described as "only just beginning," and there is indeed no reason to expect it to be quickly finished, as the Japanese have nearly a quarter of a million men in the archipelago, which abounds in strong natural defensive positions.

President Osmena of the Philippine Commonwealth landed with General MacArthur on Leyte and has set up his Government on Philippine soil—a move which should have a considerable political effect on the Filipinos, especially in

the Visayas, where Osmena was formerly more popular than his lately deceased predecessor, the Tagalog Quezo. The Americans appear to have received a warm welcome from the population in Leyte and to have been assisted by Filipino guerrillas secretly organised by American officers before the invasion. General MacArthur has also stated in a broadcast that all the islands are infested by anti-Japanese guerrillas, but he has not claimed any effective combat action by them so far outside Leyte; perhaps they are being held in leash until the Americans can give them full support. Among their exploits is declared to have been the capture of the secret papers of a Japanese Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet, who was held prisoner before his death; this is interpreted as referring to either Admiral Yamamoto or Admiral Koga, both of whom were alleged by Tokyo to have perished in air accidents, and as meaning that he crashed somewhere in the Philippines and fell into the hands of a guerrilla band.

Outside the Philippines the most important political item of the week's news has been the recall of General Stilwell (see also under "United States"). He has been relieved of his three concurrent posts of Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek as Commander-in-Chief of the "China theatre of operations," Deputy-Commander to Admiral Mountbatten in South-East Asia Command, and Commander of United States ground forces in China, Burma and India. His post under Chiang Kai-shek, as well as command of United States forces in China, will be taken over by Major-General Wedemeyer, now Deputy Chief of Staff to Admiral Mountbatten, while American troops in India and Burma will come under the command of Lieutenant-General Sultan.

(For General de Gaulle's statement on a French expeditionary force for the Far East, see under "France.")

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The presidential election campaign has now entered its final week. Mr. Dewey continues his rôle as the efficient Prosecuting Attorney of the Administration, while President Roosevelt has made a whirlwind tour of the important but doubtful States. The "experts" believe that the President and Mr. Dewey are running "neck and neck," though the *Fortune* poll gives 53.5 per cent. of the poll to Mr. Roosevelt and 46.5 to Mr. Dewey. Dr. Gallup, who is a supporter of Mr. Dewey, maintains that straw ballots indicate that the President has an extremely small margin over Mr. Dewey and insists that the latter is still gaining ground. After Mr. Roosevelt's recent tour the Democrats, however, express themselves as considerably more confident than they were a month ago.

The outstanding development in the election campaign has been the emergence of foreign policy as the dominant issue in the election, despite earlier statements. Following Mr. Roosevelt's unequivocal statement on the American delegates' powers in the new World Security Council (see last week's *Summary*) which was fairly widely described as a courageous, authoritative and timely pronouncement for which the American public had been waiting, Mr. Dewey cancelled the Farm policy speech he had planned to make. At Minneapolis, the home of Senator Ball, he accused the President of "the most completely isolationist act ever taken by an American President in our 150 years of history," that of deliberately scuttling the London Economic Conference in 1933. He also attacked his signature of the Neutrality Act and his "repudiation" of the League of Nations. Referring to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, however, Mr. Dewey, following the President's lead, said that "we must make certain that our participation in this World Security Organisation is not subjected to reservations that would nullify the power of that organisation to maintain peace and halt future aggression. That means that it must not be subject to a reservation that would require our representative to return to Congress for authority every time he had to make a decision. Obviously, Congress, and only Congress, has the constitutional power to determine what quota of force it will make available and what discretion it will give our representative to use that force. I have not the slightest doubt," continued Governor Dewey, "that a Congress which is working in partnership with the President will achieve the result we all consider essential and grant adequate power for swift action to the American representative," and he accused the President of not being able to co-operate even with a Congress that was predominantly Democratic. Mr. Dewey also revealed that he had received telegrams from leading Republicans in Congress pledging their support for the World Security Organisation.

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