

dence that must convince even the most hopeful among us that the struggle before us is one of great magnitude.

Nevertheless, the insistent inquiries that we hear on all sides as to the whereabouts of the American Fleet, and why help isn't being rushed to the Philippines, etc., are indication that our people haven't yet begun to grasp at all clearly the problems of time and space that, even in this fast-moving age, hamper our efforts in what, up to the present time, has been our peculiar sphere of war, the Far East.

To establish the picture in our minds, let us remember that the battle front in the war between the United States and Japan is 6,000 miles long. Its nearest point to Continental United States is 3,000 miles, its farthest point 8,000. From San Francisco to Hawaii, our first outpost in the Pacific, is nearly 3,000 miles. From here to the Philippines is another 5,000 miles. And today, it must be recalled also, our Navy no longer has the advantage of bases at Wake Island and Guam for fueling our fleet, or on which to base sea or air patrols to guard this far-flung line.

When it is borne in mind, too, that naval experts agree that a fleet can operate with greatest effectiveness only at distances under 1,500 miles from its base, we can begin to appreciate more clearly the situation facing the United States Navy in the far Pacific, and to understand why up to this time more has not been heard of the expected achievements of this rightfully acclaimed arm of the service.

Denied access to the strategic pin-points of land in the Pacific, which we had undertaken to transform into ports of call for our fleet; and denied also the use of the great British port of Singapore which, though not yet captured by the Japanese, has been rendered useless as a naval port, our navy faces a serious supply and fuel problem. It may be that it will be found possible to operate from Australia or from some of the islands of the Dutch East Indies. But in any case it is well to know that there are stupendous difficulties to be overcome before America can count too heavily upon its fleet.

Looking at the unpleasant side from another angle, we find that America, with all its vaunted mass production assistance, has been overpowered to date in its encounters with the Japanese, by superior forces of planes and tanks, of ships and armaments of every description. We are deficient in such things because we haven't yet reached the production effort that will be necessary. Furthermore, with the vast stretches of water intervening we find it both difficult and hazardous, and at times impossible, to land at the scene of battle the war materials so urgently needed.

A third phase of the problem has to do with the fact that, with tremendous conflicts raging in so many sections of the world, some of which may well, in the judgment of our military leaders, except for greater influence on the final result of our wars than the struggles in which our forces are now engaged in the Far East, we are under the necessity quite frequently of sending what materials are available to sectors dictated by reason rather than by our heart. In other words, it has undoubtedly been found necessary up to now, and it may well be found expedient in the future, to deny sorely-needed equipment to our own troops in order to use this equipment more effectively elsewhere.