

Aug. 23, '44

Hi darling,

As I write we are in the midst of the turmoil of packing, and for some strange reason it is not raining, although it sure feels wet out, or something. Anyway, it was fun last night. Found that some of our recently made friends had arrived to give us a farewell party, so we mixed up some pooh-pooch juice and had a very pleasant evening; everybody managed to get home with only minor injuries. One of the gals had a little trouble with a fox-hole somebody had thoughtlessly dug right in front of her in the dark, but it wasn't serious.

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Have been reading an excellent book called "You can't escape History" by John Whitaker, the Herald-Tribune correspondent. The parts about Spain & the Spanish War and France and the cause of her military fold-up are particularly enlightening. It is important that Americans realize how much of our present military success is due to the activity of the French forces of the interior. An army of fighting men springs from the soil as we advance, men who have been hiding their guns under the hedgerows for two years, organizing, sabotaging, and waiting, so long, for the hour to rise and strike. The political turmoil in France before the war which led to their lack of military preparation, their blindness to the facts of the Nazi surge to power, their internal tilting with the myth of communism while they were sold out by little dictators like Laval & Petain, by their "big business" interests like Caillaux, while Blun & Reynaud & Herriott warned & pled with them to find unity and build for strength - all this was just like the good old U.S.A., with a Congress engaged in boondoggling, W.P.A., new deals, Supreme Court, etc., refusing to fortify Guam, ratifying selective service by only one vote, business cartels by Standard Oil with the Germans, refusing aid to Republic Spain, our Wheelers and Borahs, etc. - isolationism and blindness and lack of preparation and of ability to face the facts of the unfolding scene. We were as bad as they, or worse. But we had the Atlantic Ocean, and France didn't. And it took a big kick in the ass by Japan before we awoke. I think not 1 Frenchman in ten has abetted the Nazi regime. The 90% or more have hated and suffered under their domination and have never stopped fighting, in every way they could. We must remember that the defeat was military and the people were sold out in high places - and the people never acquiesced. Now they are all fighting again, with a fierceness that is impressive.

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