

Feb. 14, 1945

Wednesday

The weather is perfect again and getting colder. The T.F. is still loafing around at about 8 knots, a couple of DD's ~~went~~ came up. We sent out mail, I wrote a short letter to the folks last night.

Winter gloves & boots were issued today, I also drew a waterproof flashlight, also got the new type (flash type) medicine kit, it really is a honey, we've had movies yesterday & today.

At 1300 we had a ACT lecture, which wasn't very good but we did find out a few things. Our bomb loading will be 10-100 lbs or 4-500 G.P. Ruben said yesterday we would probably go in at 20,000 ft. God are we going to freeze. The Japs may use their fleet but its 50-50. Their fighters are going to be well met by our's, B-29's are going to bomb ~~the place~~ ~~the night~~ ~~the day~~ before & send Beckman at night. The pictures they took aren't so good, they were taken so damn high you can practically see the curvature of the earth. Boy they sure love altitude, the Army. Taken about 30,000 ft. easy.

The Yorktown strikes first from our T.F. with the Randolph's strike right after. Each ship has a certain section of Japan for himself, right close. Our strike will have 45 T.B.F. 30 SB2C 60 P6F's. We will take off together (each ship sends up its planes) & round you & head for the target which is either ^{the} very large airfield or the engine factory which is about 20 miles northwest of Tokyo.

We were also briefed about the invasion of Iwa Jima (Bonin Id.) (760 miles from Japan) which

takes place a day or two after we heat up Japan itself. Choo Juna presents rather a rough invasion as there are only two accessible beach heads to land which go up in a steep formation and is ~~well~~ heavily protected with pillboxes, machine guns etc. It is strictly a Marine show. Although we are going to give the best & continuous air cover, the Marines forces (4 + 5th div) are expected to lose quite a few men. Inside of five minutes 5000 men will be landed which calls for split second bombing etc. The Marine Colonel aboard said, that for every machine gun we destroy, we save the lives of 100 Marines. These Marines are seasoned fighters being in three invasions already.

The island is small with a 600 ft. mt. volcano peak at one extremity which is heavily fortified. There are 11,000 Jap troops, 2 airfields & a 3 under construction. The island will be subjected to heavy bombardment by our Naval forces & air planes. In 3 days we expect to take the whole island and in 10 days or much less have an operating airfield.

B-29's have bombed the place now for 3 days consecutively.

About 7 CVE's & some warships from the 7th fleet will stay there & also lend support. The planes will fly ASDP, Photo Missions etc. We fly special strikes, SAG's, after the place is taken we know not where we will go. The Jap fleet may give us trouble, if so, we will certainly go after them with everything.