

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

It was a bit startling today to learn that Winston Churchill has had pneumonia. He has been ill for a week, but hitherto the London dispatches have said merely that he had a bad cold with a slight inflammation of one lung. Today, however, the truth was disclosed. Churchill's illness was - pneumonia.

This was revealed only after the British Prime Minister was well on the way to recovery. Today his condition was much improved, and he was rapidly getting well.

Churchill is well along in years, and mention of his having had pneumonia suggests the reflection that Britain would find it mighty hard to replace him - Churchill having ~~XXXX~~ risen to such commanding stature in this war. ^{He,} ~~But~~ in an extraordinary way, stands for the British Empire; - but then, so do other war leaders stand for their respective countries. It is ^a ~~a~~ ⁿ ~~n~~ phenomenon of this global conflict that great war leaders dominate the scene -

Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek and on the side of the enemy - Hitler. Time was when Mussolini might have been mentioned - before the Fascist Duce became more of a comic than a serious figure.

What if any one of the paramount war personalities should pass from the picture? We can indulge in a good deal of speculation on that point. Does any one man really count for so ~~mm~~ much? Does Churchill, for example? These are questions suggested by the news that the British Prime Minister has had pneumonia and is recovering.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill today refused to do anything about Gandhi. He put a London okay on the refusal of the British Indian Government to liberate the Mahatma. An appeal was addressed to Churchill by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a prominent Indian leader. Sapru ~~argued~~ argued that Gandhi should be turned loose - because, if his fast in protest against his imprisonment, should bring about ~~his~~ his death, it would result in violence and disorder in India. Churchill said - No. He contended that the imprisonment of Gandhi was justified. ~~And~~ And, as for the hunger strike, it's up to the Mahatma. Word from India indicates that Gandi's condition has improved a little. He is still fasting, but ~~he~~ he has passed ^a ~~the~~ crisis of weakness and illness.

~~Word from London indicates that Churchill's condition is improving. He, too, has been ill with a bad cold and slight inflammation of one lung. Today his temperature was normal and he is recovering rapidly.~~

~~Word from London indicates that Churchill's condition is improving. He is recovering - from pneumonia. This is the first time we've heard that the British Prime Minister has had pneumonia. He has been ill for a week, with the bulletins~~

SOLOMONS

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A new burst of air activity in the Solomons, with American planes staging five new attacks. Our bombers, based on Guadalcanal, hit the enemy in the islands to the north. Two of the raids smashed the Japs at Munda, that much bombed enemy air base. Very much bombed, indeed - today's two raids against Munda being Number Seventy-Five and Number Seventy-Six.

The Japs retaliated by striking at our forces in the New Hebrides archipelago. Today's Navy bulletin states that the enemy raid was light - nothing much.

RUSSIA

The key point in the Russian war news tonight is ~~an~~ *that* important city called Orel. ~~This is~~ *at* the northern end of the recent zone of fighting, and ~~is~~ one of the dominating centers of Nazi strength. ~~one of these famous hedge hogs that held out last winter.~~ The Red Army, having recaptured Rostov, Kharkov and Kursk, has Orel for its next objective. And today Moscow tells us that Soviet troops broke through the Nazi line south of the city and pushed on to capture several fortified places. These strong points are described as having been part of the outer defenses *at Orel.* ~~of the Nazi hedge hog at Orel.~~

To the south, Soviet troops are approaching the River Dnieper - the big bend of that stream. And they are described as being within twenty or thirty miles of the river, with the Germans resisting fiercely. The Nazis are making counter-attacks in a desperate attempt to stem the Red Army drive toward the Donets area - ~~the~~ ^{the} famous Donets industrial section.

The United Press today made a poll on the subject of what Stalin meant when he stated that the present Soviet defensive was intended to drive the Germans from Russian soil. He indicated that

in several ways, which led some people to assume that Stalin meant, the Red Army plan was to ~~xxx~~ drive the Nazis out of Russia - and then do no more. The United Press asked the opinions of leading senators, and most of them thought that Stalin meant no such thing. ~~The~~ The Senatorial opinion was that the Soviet plan was in accord with the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Roosevelt-Churchill declaration of - unconditional surrender.

TUNISIA

The news from Tunisia is excellent. The German panzers have been rolled back to Kasserine Pass. Rommel's drive looked decidedly dangerous for a while, especially when it smashed almost to that Tunisian key point called Thala. However, the Nazi North Afrika Korps pushed on too far. When, advancing from Kasserine Pass, it approached Thala, the German column was hit hard and turned back. The latest news from North Africa states that Rommel has pulled back to the Pass, and is expected to make a stand there. The gap in the mountains is being heavily hammered by Allied air power, and it looks as if the offensive may have passed to our side - with an American-British assault against Kasserine Pass marked down as the next thing on the program.

Some illumination on the Tunisian battles is given us today in an article by Scripps-Howard writer Ernie Pyle. Writing from the war front, he said: "One thing you folks at home must realize is that this Tunisian business is mainly a British show. Our part in it is small. Consequently," he adds, "our defeat is not as disastrous to the whole picture as it would have been if we had been ~~being~~ bearing the major portion of the task."

"When the time comes," Ernie Pyle goes on, ^{ca} the British First Army will squeeze on the north and the British Eighth Army will squeeze on the south, and we will hold in the middle. And, says he, it will really be the British troops who will run Rommel out of Tunisia."

To which he adds that estimates among officers at the front are two-to-six months - for finishing the Tunisian campaign.

AVIATION

Air news today ranges from Sicily to Nazi-occupied France, and tells of bombs, bullets and vegetables. ^{Which} ~~Which~~ might seem like a slip of the tongue, but we really do have some vegetable aviation news tonight.

In Sicily, American bombs hit the port of Messina - an important Axis war harbor. American bombers, based on Africa, scored direct hits on docks and buildings.

A London dispatch states that the Royal Air Force, during the course of the war, has dropped more than a hundred thousand tons of bombs on Germany, Italy and Axis-occupied Europe. A hundred thousand tons! Two hundred million pounds! More than fifty thousand tons of bombs hit the Axis during the past year. Those figures indicate what the R.A.F. is doing for victory.

Another London dispatch tells us what the R.A.F. is doing for vegetables. It relates that ^{the} ~~the~~ British Air Force is the largest vegetable producer in Great Britain. Pilots of the R.A.F. do a lot of gardening - this in response to the call for a greater production of foodstuffs on the Isle of Britain. The air fighters cultivate spare strips of land near airfields, and grow

crops at the rate of a million dollars' worth per season. The sky fighters specialize in cabbages and potatoes - in addition to bombs.

LUCKY PLANE

Over in England there is a lucky flying fortress and a lucky crew. Together, the plane and its airmen have made nine bombing raids against ~~powerfully~~ powerfully defended Nazi positions - St. Nazaire, Lorient and Brest. They've gone through storms of anti-aircraft fire, and have been furiously attacked by German flyers, but never has either the fortress or the crew received any serious injury.

The luck, however, holds good only for that particular combination of plane and personnel. If somebody other than the regular crew is aboard, ^{then} trouble is sure to develop. "On every occasion that we have had some stranger with ~~us~~ us, the ship failed to get off the ground," relates Radio Operator Richard Smith of Everett, Massachusetts. "A couple of times we got stuck in the mud," he adds, "and another time the radio went bad. Maybe six or seven times we've had strangers aboard, but never took off." In other words - no luck.

Worst of all, was when the substantially lucky crew went bombing in another fortress - not the fortunate fortress. ^{Then} They ran into clouds of bursting anti-aircraft shells and a swarm of Nazi

Messerschmitts. A big hole was shot in the plane's belly. One engine was knocked out. The oxygen system was smashed. The radio was put out of commission. The co-pilot's controls were shattered. They were barely able to limp home.

They said good-bye to that ship -- and the next time it went out it was shot down. The lucky crew, back in their own fortunate fortress, went on with their record of being blessed by the stars.

POLITICS

A trip to Washington means an entrance into a buzzing world of politics. Along the Potomac here, every scrap of political news is commented upon, analyzed, interpreted and made the basis of prophecy and prognostication. So let us adopt the Washington way, scan the news for political tidbits. Each one of these will be the basis of profound prediction. And, taken all together, a political wiseacre could dope out a political future.

Let's begin with the topic that is ~~xxxxixxxx~~ buzzing increasingly here in Washington - a fourth term. Today's contribution is from Congressman Adolph Sabbath of Illinois. He is Chairman of the Rules Committee of the House of Representatives, and is fresh from a conference with the President. Congressman Sabbath tells us that during his White House confabulation, he tried to bring up the subject of the fourth term. Does the President want one? Is he thinking of running for another reelection? The President wouldn't talk about it, says the Congressman. "He said that he didn't even want to discuss it, that he had too many more pressing and important matters on his mind," ^{So} states the lawmaker from Illinois.
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The name of Roosevelt suggests that other name - Willkie. Washington gossip is full of the supposition that Willkie intends to try again, and has begun a methodical campaign for another Republican nomination. And here is a dispatch from Hartford, Connecticut, ~~which~~ which states that ~~our~~ Republican leaders in Connecticut will back him.

One top Republican leader is quoted on the subject of the Willkie doings in Indiana over the weekend. Indiana, of course, is the original home state of the G.O.P. standard bearer of Nineteen Forty. He has been out there - making speeches and confabulating with mighty chieftains of the G.O.P. Willkie is supposed to be lining up Indiana support in his old home territory, and that excites the approval of the Connecticut Republican spokesman.

"Willkie," says he, "has done it right this time - he has started in his own home state."

And presidential aspirations are being associated with one rather surprising name - Rickenbacker. It is whispered around Washington that Captain Eddie Rickenbacker has White House dreams - which, say sundry gossips, ~~are~~ is the reason for the stand he is taking. Rick, as we all know, is pleading for all-out production

in behalf of the soldiers who are fighting, and is denouncing the slackening of work in armament plants.

Today we have a statement from Rickenbacker, a statement in answer to something printed in the Hammond Times of Hammond, Indiana. That newspaper published an editorial booming Rick as a presidential possibility. To this Rick responds today with a ~~complaint~~ ^{complete} denial.

"I have been bitten by a lot of bugs in my lifetime," says he, "and I am thoroughly immunized to the presidential bug." And he adds:

"Believe me when I say I am not in any way, shape or form interested." *Eddie Rickenbacker says he wants only one thing, which only God can grant him - 10 more years of!*

TR From the presidential talk down to the mere matter of ~~an~~ a mayor ~~expiry~~, might seem to be a long drop, but the forthcoming mayoralty election in Chicago is being watched with plenty of interest.

The city primaries were held yesterday, and today the final count reveals an interesting similarity. Both organization candidates got along in much the same fashion. One is the present Mayor, Edward J. Kelly. He was backed by the Democratic organization, which some call the Kelly-Nash machine. The Republican organization

sponsored George B. McKibbe. *Who* He sought the nomination on a platform

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He and the
strength and
wisdom to
help make
his country
worthy of
the boys
who are
fighting for
him in the
casual
wamps
of New
Guinea
and against
the huge
ark VI
human
enemies in
Africa.

of "smashing the Kelly-Nash machine."

The primary vote yesterday was light, with only about half of Chicago's ~~registration~~ registered voters turning out. The two organization candidates were chosen overwhelmingly. Kelly got more than seventy-eight per cent of the Democratic vote, and McKibben received more than seventy-six per cent of the Republican ballots. Both candidates carried all of Chicago's ~~ff~~ fifty election wards.

So both are backed solidly by their parties, which will make it as clean a cut race as could be devised - between Democrats and Republicans in Chicago. Election day - April Sixth.

Such are the political signs and portents from which a Washington wiseacre could draw great prophecies and prognostications. As for me, all that I can predict is - it will be clear tomorrow if it doesn't rain.

~~Here at the Willard today I~~
~~heard Sen. Brooks give high praise~~
~~to Gov. Dwight Green of Illinois for the~~
~~job that middle western governor has~~
~~done toward clearing up a boss-ridden~~
~~state. And I heard ^{at the Hotel Willard} rumblings of a rising~~
~~tide of enthusiasm among Republicans~~
~~over former Gov. Stassen of Minnesota, now~~
~~on active duty with the navy, as a possible G.O.P.~~
~~candidate for president.~~

WOODEN GUNS

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Today Washington had an explanation of the great sensation in the furore about the woden guns. Congressman Sparkman of Alabama explained how it happened that the anti-aircraft batteries on top of the office building of the House of Representatives were nothing but wooden dummies. He said that originally, real guns were installed in the emplacements on top of the building. Then improved types of anti-aircraft batteries were assigned for the defense of Washington. These new batteries could not be adapted to the emplacements on top of the Congressional office building. They weren't needed there, anyway - in the scheme of the new defense system. ^{So} The guns at the top of the building were taken away for use elsewhere. However, it was felt that people who had become accustomed to seeing the guns would notice their absence. In order to prevent this, the wooden dummies were installed. Congressman Sparkman, who is a Reserve anti-aircraft artillery officer, stated that Washington ^{has} ~~is~~ one of the finest anti-aircraft defenses in the ~~entire~~ world.

RUNAWAY PLANE

Here is one of the most extraordinary episodes in the annals of aviation. It tells of what they are calling - "the Flying Dutchman of the sky." The original Flying Dutchman was a ghostly sea captain who piloted a ghostly ship. The story today tells of a plane without a pilot or crew, a giant transport wandering through the sky without anybody aboard - empty, but flying on, ^{and on and on.} Abandoned, it went speeding for two thousand miles.

Two weeks ago, a Liberator cargo plane was flying over the coast of Florida. The big four-motor transport got out of control, became unmanageable - and everybody bailed out. Six of the crew and two passengers took to their parachutes - leaving the plane to speed on.

Thereafter, nothing more was seen of the abandoned skycraft, and the natural assumption was that it had gone on for a bit and plunged into the Gulf.

Today comes word of an American plane that crashed in Mexico. It hit a Mexican mountain and no sign of pilot or crew could be found. It was something of a mystery until the plane turned out to be that same Liberator transport which was abandoned

over the coast of Florida - deserted and without pilot or crew it
flew all the ~~xy~~ way across the Gulf of Mexico, ^{from Florida to Mexico,} for two thousand
miles - the Flying Dutchman of the Air.

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And s-l-u-t-m,