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Army combat planes have an overseas life expectancy of less than nine months before their loss or relegation to second line, it is reported in the current issue of *Aviation News*.

Estimates by the Army Air Forces, the article explains, make it possible to understand the need for a continued high production rate for aircraft, irrespective of technological progress that renders fighting planes out-of-date.

The AAF analysis gives the present overseas life of airplanes sent to war theatres, prior to their loss or relegation to second line, as follows below. In each case, the figure includes an average of two months life from the factory to its initial combat sortie:

- Heavy bomber 9 months
- Medium and light bomber.... 11 months
- Fighter 8 months
- Transports (Troop Carrier) 27 months

These estimates reveal why, with annual production running in the 90,000 bracket and a quarter of a million planes built for the Army and Navy since 1941, the total of Army first line combat planes, including reserves, was only 23,000 as of Oct. 31. Of these planes, 12,000 were assigned to operating squadrons; 6,000 were in the supply funnel overseas as ready replacements, or in maintenance depots or under repair; 1,200 others were on their way overseas, and the remainder was in this country.

Transcontinental Flight Record

A new West-East transcontinental flight record was made recently when a new giant Boeing transport made the hop from Seattle to Washington in almost six hours flat.

The transport, a kind of pot-bellied B-29, flew the 2,323 miles in six hours, three minutes, 50 seconds. The craft, designed to carry a payload of 25,000 pounds, had 20,000 pounds aboard in its record-breaking dash.

Previous transport record was set last year by the Lockheed Constellation, which hopped 2,300 miles from Burbank Cal., to Washington in six hours, 57 minutes, 51 seconds.

"The world community must be prepared to deal with international gangsters when they first show their heads, not after they have grown great and strong on conquest and only a world war can stop them."—SENATOR JOSEPH H. BALL of Minnesota.

Russian Manpower

By Lt. (j.g.) W. O. Shanahan

Russian armies in less than a week of fighting have overrun Warsaw, Kielce, Krakow, and Lodz, and now threaten Breslau, Posen, and Konigsberg. In the first great rush of Soviet armies, spectacular gains of 20 or even 30 miles a day have been made. It is inevitable that Americans should ask why the Russians are able to move so rapidly and why their armies generate such terrible power.

First the size of the Soviet forces must be considered. German sources claim that 3,000,000 men are storming their eastern defenses. From what is known of Soviet military organization it is probable that this represents more combat divisions than would be found in an equivalent number of American or British troops.

The Russians have simplified their supply problem and reduced the number of men in their service forces by submitting every item of equipment to rigid scrutiny: will it add to the fire and attack power of the front fighters? As a consequence the Russian soldier moves with a minimum of personal gear and expects little in the way of personal comforts. His supply service makes use of every nondescript truck, cart, or horse, and it brings forward only materials that the soldier needs to advance.

Soviet Sailors Fight On Land

Additional manpower is made available for combat divisions by the lack of a large navy. Less than half a million men wear the Red Navy uniform and in great emergencies even sailors are used ashore as infantry. At Odessa, Sevastopol, and Novorossisk the Red Navy fought the Germans in trenches around the town, and from house to house when the Germans broke through the defense.

Since ground forces come first in the Soviet military plan, no great mass of manpower has been allotted to a strategic air force. More than two million men are used in one way or another in the U. S. Army's air forces. This is not to say that the Russians underestimate air power. It is organized only for tactical support of Soviet armies; there are no great fleets of bombers which can be used only for assaults on enemy industrial areas. Whatever shortcomings this organization may have it does make more men available for the front.

Finally there is the element of military experience. To lead an army or a platoon requires professional ability that is difficult to acquire. Neither talented officers nor experienced combat soldiers are made overnight. After almost four years of war and an epic advance of 1800 miles, the qualities of Soviet military leadership and the tactical skill of the average soldier have at last surpassed those of the aggressor.

The Lighter Side...

From Grampaw Pettibone of Naval Aviation News: "When you hear anybody blowing about how hot a pilot he is, don't take it too seriously. Remember the parrot—among birds he is the best talker and the worst flier."

* * *

Sedgewick: "Terribly sorry you buried your wife yesterday."

Watleywood: "Had to—dead, you know."

* * *

A pullman porter was doing his best to get a big tip from a Lieutenant. As the train neared the latter's station, the porter asked, "Would yo'all like to be brushed off now, Commander?" "Yes," was the reply. "Let us carry yo' grips, Capt'n," he continued. "Very well," said the officer. "Now careful down them steps, Commodore," added the porter, "and don't forget yo' portah, Admiral."

With a nod the Lieutenant reached in his pocket and handed the porter a dime. Not to be outdone, the porter replied, "So long, Mac!"

* * *

I had sworn to be a bachelor.
She had sworn to be a bride.
But I guess you know the answer.
She had nature on her side.

* * *

Seaman: "Let's teach that dumb blonde the difference between right and wrong."
Mate: "Okay, you teach her what's right."

* * *

CBM: "Was your girl pleased with the bathing suit you gave her?"

BM2c: "Yeah—you should have seen her beam when she put it on!"

* * *

"So you let him drive away out in the country and park, eh?"

"I did like fun."

"That's my weakness, too."

Male Call

by Milton Caniff; creator of "Terry and the Pirates"



As He Was

GEEZT—WHO'S READIN' THE SOLDIER'S HANDBOOK?
IT'S OL' CHOCKLE! HE WANTS TO MAKE PFC BEFORE THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF HIS INDUCTION! HE THINKS THE BOOK ACT WILL IMPRESS THE TOP!

THAT MIST-HEAD HASN'T LEARNED HIS GENERAL ORDERS YET...
GOT AN IDEA! ...LET'S MOVE HIS BOOKMARK BACK A FEW PAGES AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS!

WELL, CHOCKLE, NOTHING LIKE TRYING FOR A RATING WHILE WAITING... GOOD STUFF IN THE OL' F.M.
OH, YES, SORJINT, SIR... THAT'S A FACT WHAT YOU SAID...

THERE IS INDEED ONLY ONE TROUBLE... THIS HERE WRITER KEEPS REPEATIN' HISSELF ALLA TIME!

LATER