

FOUR

The Sunday Star-News

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MEMBER THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounding determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God.

Roosevelt's War Message. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1944.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Comes again the Holy Night As in days of long ago; Waiting hearts again should see Heaven alight and hear his glow. For the Father heart of God Trobs with yearning love the same And the Saviour longs to save As when first to earth He came. FRED SCOTT SHEPARD.

Extension Of The Limits

We hope there now will be reasonably complete agreement on the proposal for extension of the city limits.

The latest plan, published last Sunday, appears to have received careful study and while it may have some imperfections, it seems acceptable generally. We hope it will be introduced in the General Assembly and approved there, that the referendum provided in it will be called as promptly as possible, and that the proposal will then be ratified by the voters.

Britain's Tactlessness

The commentator Gabriel Heatter, recently reporting on a conversation with a cab driver, on the Greek imbroglio, said the driver turned and said: "You know what I think? I think this is the first battle of World War Three."

Certainly it is to be hoped that the difficulty can be adjusted before this kind of thinking becomes general. The fighting in this greatest of all wars will have been a fruitless and ghastly thing if it turns out to have been only the prelude to an even more devastating world struggle.

Don't Repeat The Mistake

The war in the Pacific has reached a stage where it can be said that Japan virtually has lost the great island empire which it wrested from the United States, the Netherlands and other powers in the first months of the war.

But we should not fall into a state of untimely optimism such as characterized our attitude about the European front. The war with Japan almost certainly is farther from an end than the German war.

The Nation must be prepared for a long and costly struggle in Asia, and must not make the mistake of assuming that the war effort on the home front can be relaxed.

Is There A Santa Claus?

In answer to many requests, the following editorial written by Francis P. Church in 1897 for the New York Sun is reprinted: We take pleasure in answering at once and thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of the Sun:

"Dear Editor—I am 8 years old. 'Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. 'Papa says, 'If you see it in the Sun it's so.' Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?"

Virginia O'Hanlon "115 West Ninety-Fifth Street." VIRGINIA, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible to their little minds.

Not believe in SANTA CLAUS? You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see SANTA CLAUS coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees SANTA CLAUS, but that is no sign that there is no SANTA CLAUS.

NO SANTA CLAUS? THANK GOD! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Wilmington After The War

The bad news from the European front may be no time to renew the discussion of Wilmington's postwar prospects. Certainly all necessary energy should be put forth in this community as in all others to support our fighting men.

But at the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that employment after the war is a matter of supreme importance to Wilmington and New Hanover county. The cessation of wartime activity will leave thousands without work.

We suggest that every citizen be giving thought to this problem, and let no reasonable prospect for new post-war industry go unnoticed. Suggestions for such industries may be directed to the City Planning Board, at the City Hall. The Board is making plans for developing post-war industry and employment, and suggestions will be of great value.

A Wailing Wall

The construction at Front and Red Cross streets of a Wailing Wall, counterpart of that built in Palestine from the stones of Solomon's Temple, is being seriously considered by fuel oil officials of the Wilmington War Price and Rationing office.

The Jerusalem wall is open for lamentation only on Fridays, whereas the Wilmington weeping-place could easily be filled daily, the Office of Price Administration people think, by ration applicants who have squandered their fuel coupons on two cold spells and find themselves now bereft of heat for the remaining 89 days of winter.

The over-use of oil allowances is ascribed to a number of circumstances, of which some are valid excuses and some are not, but none of which is likely to procure additional coupons. Some applicants sheepishly admit that they expected V-E Day, with a concomitant relaxation in east coast oil restrictions, to have arrived ere now.

Bound by rigid rulings against the urgings of their own sympathies, the fuel office clerks bemoan their inability to help the shivering prodigals, but if the wall goes up, they promise, they will gladly join in the wailing.

CAROLINA

FROM THE

CAPITAL

By ALLEN J. GREEN

Star-News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23.—With Bluetenthal Field, a Class V airport, scheduled to revert to public ownership after the war, Wilmington is in position to become a leading Southern air center, in the opinion of the National Aeronautic Association, if some advance planning is done now.

Expansion of Bluetenthal by the Army during the war gives the city a field suitable for the largest aircraft now flying and a logical stop on north-south air routes as well as a potential terminal for east-west flights.

Bluetenthal's facilities, NAA officials pointed out, makes it ideal as a terminal for short "feeder" airlines, operating in between localities not on the main air routes with freight and passengers. The close conjunction of the field to New Hanover truck farms point to speedy development of an air freight service after the war.

With air freight, NAA says, New Hanover growers can extend their market range—can take advantage of the best prices offered on a dozen Eastern and Northern market centers.

NAA's position, however, is that commercial air developments are only a small part of the post-war aviation picture. With manufacturing advances made during the war, private planes—safe and well within the average person's price range as today's automobiles—are going to appear on the market in quantity.

This postwar private plane, according to NAA, is potentially as useful and necessary to the average person as his automobile. The hitch is that the private airplane is now comparable to an automobile without a road on which to operate since airports are not convenient to downtown areas.

In order for cities like Wilmington to take advantage of the air age, NAA argues, it becomes essential for the city to provide facilities like those now provided for automobiles. Which from the NAA point-of-view isn't as hard as it sounds.

NAA, a non-partisan, non-profit aeronautical association, is conducting a nation-wide campaign for airports, flightstops, and airhubs—to bring the private flier to the city.

Wilmington, it points out, will probably inaugurate a slum clearance program after the war. Part of the area cleared could be devoted to an airport—a small field right in the heart of the city for the average citizen flying into town to work, or shop, or for the tourist stopping over.

Development of such facilities, NAA contends, would attract thousands of air tourists annually to Wilmington for sightseeing, recreation and hunting and fishing—and spell the difference between a town on an airline and an air center.

TAR HEEL HONORED

Maritime Commission will name another Liberty ship, now under construction at Savannah, for a North Carolina merchant marine hero. The vessel will be christened the George R. Poole in memory of a Raleigh-born, 53-year-old assistant engineer who died in the torpedoing of the SS Gulfstate, a tanker, on April 3, 1943.

CAREER NOT ENDED?

Tar Heels around the Capitol read political motives in Sen. Robert R. Reynolds' farewell speech in the Senate last week—and point out that the junior senator, who declined to stand for re-election, left himself a springboard for re-entry into politics if he so desires. He declared:

"Mr. President, in reference to statements as to the rebirth of large-scale isolationism, as a humble citizen of the American republic, I wish to express my opinion to the effect that within two years from now the people of the United States of America will have turned again to isolationism and to real, genuine American nationalism."

CONGRESSIONAL PAY RAISES

When the new Congress convenes in January, the representatives and senators are going to be confronted, once again, with the delicate question of raising their own salaries. A bill to raise the salaries of both groups from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year died for want of action last week and its supporters are planning to re-introduce it.

THE GREAT MYSTERY



A Prayer At Christmastide

The man or woman does not live—or has ever lived—who could not profit by this Christmas Prayer by Paul Warwick, which appeared in The Atlanta Constitution. Read it. Clip it. On Christmas morning, when all is quiet, slip off into a corner and read it again. It will cleanse the soul and bring peace to the troubled heart.

WITH THE AEF

Meet The OPA Of Chengtu

BY JOHN GROVER Substituting for Kenneth L. Dixon CHENG TU, Szechwan, China—(Delayed)—He's the "OPA Administrator" of Chengtu, the boss of the downtown ward of this 2,200-year-old west China metropolis. And he's a GI Joe who couldn't order chow suey without pointing to a menu in his native Chicago 18 months ago.

On his job, he's a combination international banker, etiquette authority, lover and editor and information supervisor. That's PFC. C. J. (Chick) Breckinridge, who used to manage a small Chicago loan office at 1 North Pulaski street. "Breck" was assigned a desk in the Chengtu Military Police office nine months ago, a detail of the Army Special Service Forces. He was supposed to help bewildered GIs find their way among the town's more than 500,000 equally puzzled Chinese.

The GI's wanted steaks, soups, soups and soups for the girls back home. Breck admits he did not know his elbow from a bale of hay in Chinese when he first came. It's all different now. Some of the Midwest's "git up and git" that made Chicago the Nation's "freight handler" has been transplanted to this town where pigs are still toted to market in wheelbarrows.

An index was made of Chengtu shops, including an approximate fair price schedule. Rickshaw happy GIs from blithely paying eight to ten times the normal tariff. Then the vexing problem of money exchange in war-inflated Chinese currency had to be licked. Chinese merchants—and none are smarter—like the feel of GI-Yankee pocket lettuce and the exchange rates had the doughboys fiscal foolish. When they were handed a bale of crisp, new banknotes totaling \$4,800 Chinese for one U. S. \$20 bill, it seemed like financial manna.

Breck and helpful, ethical Chinese, learned that some exchange artists were giving Americans only \$240 Chinese for \$1 U. S. while that day's going rate was 260 to 1. At that rate, a money changer could net a profit of \$75 U. S. without much trouble every day. So Breck got the dope on the exchange rate daily and announced it to shop-bound soldiers. When GI Joe knows the score, he's hard to chisel. Then, Chinese steaks didn't jibe with American memory of T-bones. So this "Chicago Mandarin" toured the approved restaurants and taught cooking. Now a half-dozen Chengtu restaurants feature "double thick steaks."

Interpreting

The War

By KIRKE L. SIMPSON

Associated Press War Analyst Bleak battle news from Europe confronted home front readers this Christmas Eve week-end; but reassuring gleams were not lacking.

It seemed clear that the week-old Nazi surprise counter attack in Belgium and Luxembourg was approaching a crisis. It had hurled deeply through American First Army forward echelons on that once dormant sector—but was slowing up short of any decisive result beyond throwing Allied winter offensive plans out of gear.

American losses, unquestionably heavy both in battle casualties and material, are yet to be revealed. The cost to the foe also still is to be reckoned except for one factor of tremendous significance. Every man, tank, plane or gun put out of action in enemy ranks represents relatively a greater drain into German reserve strength than does any similar American or Allied loss.

That is the factor that in the long run will crush Germany in total defeat. That is the circumstance which inspired the ringing battle order call by the Allied generalissimo, General Eisenhower, to his troops.

"By rushing out from fixed defenses the enemy may give us the chance to turn his great gamble into his worst defeat," the Eisenhower order said. There was no "back-to-the-wall" or "die-at-your-post" flavor to his summons. On the contrary the general told his armies in effect that Nazi desperation had given them an opportunity they could not otherwise have foreseen for weeks or months of slogging, slow pressure against deeply fortified German defenses.

By every sign available the crisis for the Nazis cannot be long deferred. The German commander has fully committed to this action a fourth or more of his total available divisional strength in the west, and a far larger proportion of his crack field units as distinct from Front troops. If he has overreached himself as Eisenhower and his staff obviously believe he has, the evidence of it is all but certain to be clearly apparent within the next few days.

SENATE SEEKING

LOUDER SESSION

By TOM REEDY

WASHINGTON Dec. 23.—Some senators want microphones for Christmas. They are getting tired of cupping their ears. The thought of putting an amplifying system in the senate chamber has horrified members in the past but now the move is on again.

It is gaining support, too. Something might be done about it in the 79th Congress. Senator Andrews (D-Fla.) has a resolution to install microphones. His Florida colleague, Pepper, wants to go even further. He has a proposal to put the Senate proceedings on the radio.

Support is coming from those senators whose hearing isn't so good any more. Half the time they just don't know what the other half is saying. "The Senate is working with the most important business of the generation and this is not time, any feel, to be missing anything."

The Senate has to solve some problems before it can install microphones however. One of the biggest difficulties is presented by the senators themselves. They walk around aimlessly from desk to desk, talking to the while. You just don't know what part of the chamber they turn up in next.

Another objection that is being raised is that the Senate may want to go into secret sessions and some of the members don't want any of the members don't want any wires around that can be tapped. Senator Secretary Edwin A. Hatch said that objection has been raised before and it carries a lot of weight.

Some system of portable microphones might be worked out. However they do it, there'll be a loud huzzah from the press galleries. Some days I forget my trumpet and miss a lot of good quotes.

JAPAN PROTESTS

ALLEGED SINKING OF MERCY VESSEL

By The Associated Press Japan's Domei news agency reported today an official protest had been made to the United States government over the alleged sinking of a Japanese hospital ship, the Muro Maru by American planes in a raid on Manila harbor December 13.

Domei said the hospital ship was bombed and strafed and it sank several hours later as the result of the attacks. The Federal Communications Commission, which picked up the Domei report, said it was broadcast in English and intended for American consumption.

Domei asserted the U. S. government had been notified that last January through neutral channels that the Muro Maru was a hospital ship in accordance with the Geneva Convention. The wing of a bee makes 190 movements a second; of a wasp 110; of a fly, 330.