

WSM, January 30, 1944

Good Morning, Friends:

Washington, Town
~~Washington~~, like every city, town, hamlet and home in America, was
+ saddened
shocked ~~and~~ horrified by the details finally released by the army and navy
of how the Japanese fiendishly tortured, persecuted, and murdered the
American and Philippine soldiers taken prisoners in the Philippines.

These unspeakable savage atrocities made the blood in every true American's
veins boil and run hot. ~~We must~~ let this steel our determination to continue
the fight until those who started this war and perpetrated these uncivilized
horrors are utterly crushed and rendered utterly unable ever again to
embroil the world in another war. This nation will want vengeance. ~~It~~

We must not, though, try to match or outdo the bestial brutality of the

Japanese. These wrongs must be avenged. Yes, they must. But let us
seek our revenge upon those responsible for these cruel atrocities.

seek some revenge now upon
Some people have suggested that we ~~torture and murder~~ the approximately

250,000 Japanese that we have interned in concentration camps. But a

great majority of these, though ~~the~~ Japanese race, are American citizens--

Some of them loyal and others, of course, disloyal. Would it be a Christian

act to torture and starve and murder these people? Let us remember also

that Japan still has several thousand American prisoners as well as many

Philippine prisoners, British prisoners, and Dutch. On the other hand,

we have taken only a few Japanese prisoners, less than four hundred. The

treatment given American prisoners by the Japanese may be one explanation

why we have taken so few prisoners. It is said that the Japanese soldiers

have been told that if they are taken prisoners by the Americans they face horrible tortures and eventual death. At any rate, from official reports, we know that ~~many~~ Japanese soldiers ^{apparently} prefer death to capture.

It might as well be said, too, that American soldiers so hate and distrust the Japanese that they are not particularly anxious to ~~capture~~ ^{take} them alive.

And, of course, many of our soldiers have no intention of ever being captured by the Japanese. In other words, the fighting between the American and Japanese soldier is, in most cases, a fight to the death. And another thing to remember in connection with our treatment of Japanese soldiers is that, according to reliable information, the Japanese government considers a Japanese soldier dead when he permits himself to be taken prisoner. He stands disgraced before his country and his family and

~~for that~~ so far the Japanese government has shown little concern over the treatment and welfare of ^{the} Japanese prisoners of war. *soldiers whom we hold as Is that any reason, though, why we should torture them?*

Think, for a moment, of the difference between their treatment of American prisoners and our treatment of the ~~something like~~ four hundred Japanese prisoners. While ~~they~~ ^{the Japanese} have been starving, beating, torturing, and denying medical treatment to their American prisoners, we have built comfortable prisoner cantonments for the Japanese prisoners. These cantonments are warm and comfortable, equipped with good beds, recreation facilities, a staff of competent doctors, a supply of the best medicines available, and adequate hospital facilities. They are fed the best of

The State Department was a significant diplomatic victory for us when Argentina finally ~~was~~ broke with the Axis, and ~~was~~ ^{being it was a solidified} by a stoppage of our ~~shipment of oil and gasoline to Germany.~~ This was immediately followed by a stoppage of our shipment of oil and gasoline to Germany. continued to be too friendly to Germany.

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American food. Isn't that a great difference? It is the difference

between a heathen and a Christian nation.

The fight over the soldiers vote bill has, I am sorry to report, turned into a political fight and a hot one. Realizing, no doubt, that it had come to this, President Roosevelt sent a blistering message to Congress ^{during the week} which in itself was not without political punch and made the question even more a political fight. Both the House and the Senate are scheduled to vote on this question next week. The Senate is to take it up tomorrow and the House is to take it up Tuesday. Now what is the fight all about? ^{briefly} Well, here is the situation. A majority of the Republicans in Congress seem to have joined hands with some Southern Democrats to put over a bill which would ~~virtually~~ leave all soldier voting up to the States with the army and navy, of course, to transport the state ballots. ~~Now~~ On the other hand, many other members of Congress and the President have insisted that only a very few soldiers could ^{vote} actually ~~have the privilege of voting~~ unless Federal machinery for handling the problem was set up and a uniform ballot supplied to the armed forces. On the one hand, those who want a uniform Federal ballot, including the President, say that the Federal government which has drafted these men from every state and hamlet in the country and sent them to the battle fronts of the world, not only has the right but an obligation to see to it that these soldiers have a voice in deciding what men and what party

will direct the destinies of their nation. On the other hand, those who advocate leaving ~~the~~ it entirely to the states say that, under the constitution voting, is entirely a state ^{right} ~~question~~ and that the soldiers can ~~and can~~ ^{only} vote under the State absentee voting laws. Now leaving the constitutional question aside for the moment, let's take a simple example of how these two procedures would work. Let's take first the so-called state's right method which is embodied in the bill which has passed the Senate before Christmas and in the Rankin Bill to be considered by the House Tuesday.

A soldier must write into his local election officials and ask that an absentee ballot be sent him. Let us say that a soldier in North Africa writes home to his local election officials requesting an absentee ballot. The ballot can't be sent him until the primaries are over because the names of the candidates in the general election will not be known until then, ~~and the soldier would have to wait until the general election~~. But let us say that as soon as the primaries are over, the local election officials mail the ballot to this soldier in North Africa. In the meantime, the ~~soldier~~ soldier may have moved to Sicily. And, ~~of~~ ^{ballot, like other mail, of course,} ~~course~~, His ~~mail~~ would be forwarded on there. But before it gets there, he might have landed in Italy or moved ~~from other~~ some other place. So, the absentee ballot might not reach him ^{or get back home} until the election was all over.

This is only one of the many difficulties. Now, if there ~~was~~ ^{were} a uniform

Federal ballot, how would this same soldier, moving about as he is, get to vote? Well, in the first place, the Federal ballot, which the Republicans have nicknamed the bobtail ballot, would not be mailed to him personally. A supply of these ballots would be printed ^{by the War & Navy Dept} and sent to every place where American soldiers ^{or sailors} are concentrated, whether it be North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Guadalcanal, the Aleutians, ~~or~~ Christmas island ^{on the high seas}. These ballots would be sent ahead without the names of the candidates. After the primaries are over and the candidates of the respective parties are known, the War and Navy Departments would send out a radiogram or a telegram to all the headquarters naming the candidates for President, for the Senate and for Congress and their ^{political} ~~parties~~ ^{affiliation}. This ~~would be posted and this~~ information would be made available to all the soldiers along with the ~~blank uniform~~ ballot. The soldier then, wherever he is, could take this Federal uniform ballot and write in the name of the candidate or the political party ~~and~~ for which he desired to vote. He would also write in his own name in a place ~~where~~ which would be provided and his ^{home} ~~own~~ address. All of these ballots then from military concentrations around the world would be forwarded back to the United States, ^{sorted} ^{mailed out to} ~~sent to~~ the respective local election ^{officials} ~~authorities~~ who would then decide whether or not the soldier was entitled to vote, ^{just as in the case of any other voter.}

In his message to Congress, the President said this was the only practical way to give the soldiers a vote, pointing out that by using the

State absentee^{voting} law only 28,000 soldiers voted in the election two years ago. Now the partisan political angle to the question was brought into the open by Senator Holman, a Republican Senator from the State of Washington. He said that if Mr. Roosevelt would not be a candidate for a fourth term, there might not be so much debate and fight on the question. Whereupon, Democratic Senators, like Senator Hatch from New Mexico, Senator Murdock from Arizona, Senator Barkley, the Democratic leader from Kentucky, pounced upon him with all feet. Whether or not rightly or wrongly, a good many Republican members of Congress feel that the President as commander-in-chief would have an advantage ~~to~~ with the soldier vote. They still say, though, that they want the soldier to have the privilege of voting, but they insist, along with a ~~large number~~^{several} Southern Democrats, that this question is one for the states to handle. ~~The~~ The other side comes back and says, "But the states can't handle it. ~~So~~ If you really want the soldier to vote, ~~then~~ be for our bill." The retort comes back: "But ~~this~~^{your bill} is unconstitutional." ~~Then~~, So, the argument goes on ad infinitum. ~~It remains~~ It reminds me of that song which swept the country a few years ago about the "music goes round and round and it comes out here" ~~and there.~~

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back to the United States from military concentrations around the world, would be sorted and mailed out to the respective local election officials who would then decide whether or not the soldier was entitled to vote, just as in the case of any other voter.

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