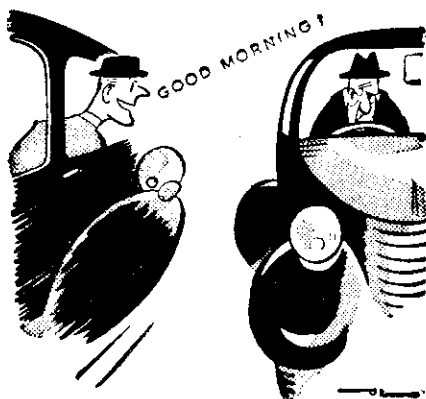




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COLONEL McCORMICK:

Anti-British Isolationist

(Prepared for "The Listener" by TOM L. MILLS)

COLONEL McCORMICK is in the news again—this time using an Australian (Lt.-General Bennett) and a Singapore incident as a bludgeon theme for his life-long animosity to Britain.

FOR many years Colonel McCormick, principal proprietor of the *Chicago Tribune*, has been a recurrent head-liner in the columns of American newspapers. For the most part, editors of the principal papers of New Zealand, Australia and England are unknown to the man in the street and take little or no part in politics outside the editorial columns of their papers. They do not even sign their names to special articles. In American journalism, however, the editors are anything but anonymous. Therefore Robert McCormick represents the rule, not the exception, in pouring out his antipathies under his own name, but it is a genuine and well-earned title. Robert Rutherford McCormick won his spurs and his insignia and his rank in World War I. As a Major he went to England in 1915; and when the American army arrived in France he was on the Headquarters staff of General Pershing. He took part in the battle of Cantigny and impressed that fact permanently upon the State of Illinois (of which Chicago is the capital city) by naming his country estate after that historic episode.



COLONEL McCORMICK
"Anything but anonymous"

Prejudiced but Gifted

It is hard to understand the two outstanding and bitter prejudices of this very strong and gifted American: his persistent hatred for all things British and his leadership in Isolationism. For he is descended from an autocratic Virginian family, some of them soldiers; his father was in the diplomatic service, in the London Embassy, and he himself attended a primary school in England. Yet from his young manhood days—he is now 64—he has never been able to see anything good coming out of England. During the Great War he went on a military mission to the Russian front, the result of which was a book *With the Russian Army*, which he dedicated to the Grand Duke Nicholas (the Czar's brother) and in which he expressed great admiration for the Army of the East; but throughout the war and afterwards he was critical of the prowess of England's fighting forces. It may be that it is his animosity against England that has developed his Isolationism until it has become a passion. Yet he has decided and often expressed hatred of pacifists!

Colonel McCormick has full control of the wealthiest and (in Chicago) the most influential daily paper in the 48 States. Yet outside his home town—the McCormicks migrated from the Southern State to Chicago a full century ago—he cuts little ice nationally. He has had high civic honours in his great city; yet although he has yearned for State and Congressional places in the political sun, none have come to him. His politics are Republican; he was vehemently anti-Rooseveltian and has hammered the New

Deal mercilessly. Even his signed editorial articles are tinged by his personal prejudices. If he conceives a strong liking for a public man, that man gets the *Tribune's* backing through good report and ill.

Rhode Island Incident

His political bias takes strange and at times dramatic twists. There was the occasion when the Legislature of Rhode Island State, newly elected by a Democratic victory, ousted the Republican members off the Supreme Court bench. The fiery Colonel "read" Rhode Island State "out of the Union" and ordered its star to be ripped from every flag flying from the towers of the great building housing his paper! This he did despite the advice of his corps of legal luminaries that to deface the American flag was a highly criminal offence! In order to sew the stars back on again on the silken areas of The Stars and Stripes the employees of the *Tribune* had to haul down the flags that had braved the breezes of the city of the lakes for many years. Naturally the Chicagoans saw the bare flagpoles, the telephones in the many-storeyed building rang asking who was dead? It was weeks before the Czar of Chicago recovered from that episode.

Most of his closest friends—he is really familiar with no one—are wealthy old-line Republicans. While some of the rank and file members of the Republican Party strongly dislike the Colonel, he is in almost complete control of the party machine in the State of Illinois. Because of his persistent anti-war policy while Britain was holding the fort alone against Hitler, McCormick attracted the

(continued on next page)