

Nixon has pneumonia

F Post 4/7/74

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Former President Richard M. Nixon is suffering from a slight case of pneumonia and a partial collapse of his right lung and he is being treated with antibiotics, his doctor said today.

Nixon has a slightly elevated temperature due to pneumonitis, described as a synonym for pneumonia, centered in a small area of his right lung. He also suffers from irritation caused by a hematoma, or blood mass, in the small of his back.

The stricken area is presumably the atelectasis, or so-called "inactive area of living tissue" in Nixon's right lung. The condition has caused the organ to partially collapse.

The doctor said the pneumonitis was determined by tests. Nixon was still in serious condition and "it would be premature to offer a prognosis at this time," the doctor added.

But he also had good news, saying that the fluid in Nixon's left lung was continuing to diminish and that the former president was exhibiting "slow but gradual improvement."

Dr. John Lungren added that 12 to 18 patients were being transferred to the hospital's newly completed top floor intensive care unit, where Nixon has been the only patient in the past two weeks. He said Nixon was glad to hear he would have company.

Lungren made his report in a written statement read to newsmen by a hospital spokesman.

When Lungren revealed the atelectasis on Tuesday, a pulmonary specialist said it could be an early sign of pneumonia, or caused by blood clots or recent surgery. Nixon had phlebitis surgery last week.