

Washington Digest

U. S. State Dept. Seeks to Bring Diplomacy in Open

Assistant Secretary MacLeish Resolved to Inform People of United Nations Dickerings; Plans to Develop Public Interest.

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By the time these lines are in print the biggest publicity job for the biggest institution the world has ever planned will probably have been launched by the heretofore least publicity minded department of the government—the state department. It is a "build up" for the meeting of the United Nations to be held in San Francisco, April 25.

I am writing this a few minutes after returning from the office of the man who is planning the program, Archibald MacLeish, assistant secretary of state.

The location is journalistically familiar to me and it lies nearby. Only one block, then across Lafayette park, across Pennsylvania avenue and then along almost another block of to-me very familiar marble corridor. I have had many interviews in that ancient, impressive rococo state department building, but never one in which a member of the staid and conservative institution stuck his neck out farther and with such abandon. MacLeish is the father of the plan I mentioned—the plan to tell the country, by means of every available publicizing medium, what the international gathering on the Pacific coast is all about.

Assistant Secretary MacLeish has announced as his creed, "no foreign policy can succeed in these days unless it has the full understanding and support of the people."

Sets Stage for Open Covenants

To put his words into deeds he has planned a program which will set the stage at San Francisco for "open covenants openly arrived at," that theory, so noble in its conception, which Woodrow Wilson proclaimed but found himself unable to put into effect when it came to foreign affairs. MacLeish has gone all the way out on a very tenuous limb and he realizes where it will leave him if the meeting in San Francisco crawls into a cavern of secrecy and pulls the cavern in after it.

"Foreign relations" are traditionally established and carried on by diplomats who are trained to work in the dark. Like mules in mines, they probably would not be able to see the most persuasive argument if it were displayed in the light of pitiless publicity. And, it is freely admitted, it would be highly impractical to carry on all international relations in front of a news-reel camera and in earshot of press and radio. One doesn't wash one's linen, soiled or otherwise, in public and the board of directors doesn't meet in the presence of the stockholders.

But MacLeish believes there can be a compromise and he is going to risk the unpleasant reaction that might take place if it fails. He is going to insist that the dignified and discreet state department use up-to-the-minute press agent methods to prepare the people for the San Francisco meeting. And then, if the meeting goes underground on them it will just be too bad, MacLeish says.

The public is already keenly interested. Hundreds of organizations have besieged the department with questions, demands for material for debate and discussion, explanation, interpretation. Schools, churches, labor unions, business associations all want information on what really happened at Dumbarton Oaks, Tehran, Yalta—and what's next.

With a pretty good idea of what the public wants to know the state department is preparing a set of outlines on such topics as: "War: how can we prevent it?" (the main purpose of the UN) "Prosperity: how can we attain it?" (that takes in the economic plans such as the monetary program agreed upon at Bretton Woods, the function of the proposed international economic council, credit for reconstruction . . .)

Another topic, "Social Progress: how can we work for it?" will explain the various programs for health and education which have been discussed here and elsewhere. There are other documents including a short explanation in simple language of exactly what was agreed upon at Dumbarton Oaks and is to be discussed at the San Francisco meeting.

There will be other forms of publicity through the press and radio and a movie picture projecting the story of the United Nations some 20 years into the future, showing how it is hoped that the organization will fit into the world of tomorrow.

Communications Broaden Interest

By the time the San Francisco meeting begins its deliberations it would be fair to assume that the general public will have heard enough about its purpose to have considerable curiosity concerning what goes on at the negotiations. In other words, it will become "must" news and press and radio will hammer loudly on any doors that are closed too long. Mr. MacLeish's theories will have an excellent opportunity for a very thorough test. If the doors don't open he will be decidedly on the spot.

The reason he insists on this bold, frontal attack on the "open covenants" problem is because he believes the world is confronted with a condition and not a theory.

"Modern electrical communication," he says, "has in fact created the Parliament of Man about which Tennyson dreamed."

"It is possible to dislike the Parliament of man," he explains. "There are those who do dislike it—who would like to return to the old system of foreign relations conducted exclusively through the chancelleries in secret codes. But it is impossible to ignore that the Parliament of Man is now convened in continuous session, thanks to public channels of communications, without rules of order, limitations of debate, or privileges of the house and those who refuse to take account of its proceedings may wake and find that those proceedings have taken no account of them."

Of course, the press has been fighting to achieve just such a kind of free news sources as MacLeish is talking about. They almost had to push back bayonets to get within shouting distance of the international food conference at Hot Springs which produced UNRRA; they have fought and occasionally won, for a slackening of the censorship on war news. But I attended a luncheon not long ago when MacLeish outlined his theories and I saw more than one mouth go down in cynical doubt of his possible success.

He is aware of this feeling, aware of the pressure of tradition and of habit, but he intends to go ahead. And one thing that gives him more aid and comfort than anything else is the widespread and happy admission that the report on the Yalta conference was so much more frank and detailed than anybody had dared hope.

Perhaps MacLeish's neck is not out too far, after all.

One of the greatest difficulties which any governmental institution meets in deciding on a course of action which doesn't have to be submitted to an actual vote either of the people or of congress, is an ability to judge public opinion. Frequently, the tendency is "when in doubt leave out."

The army pursued that policy in regard to the acceptance of Negro nurses for a long time. Finally, either by force of necessity or good guessing, it ruled that Negro nurses were eligible. A few weeks later along came the results of a poll taken by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Denver—a nonpartisan, noncommercial organization whose reputation is high among the professional poll-takers.

It confirmed the army's judgment by revealing that the majority of those white, civilian adults, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, in cities, towns and rural areas, questioned, said "yes" to the following question:

"If you were sick in a hospital, would it be all right with you if you had a negro nurse, or wouldn't you like it?"

The majority—57 per cent said "yes," 1 per cent was "undecided." Of the "yessers," 3 per cent said if they had a choice, they would take a white woman. Only 4 out of 10 southerners said "yes," which seems strange since so many of them had "mammies."

Philippine Capital Set Afire



Fires that may continue for weeks have been set on Luzon Island. In the city of Manila, a large part of the city will be in ruins before the American forces can get the flames under control. Many of the Japs are still hiding in the city, setting new fires in various locations.

Capture Nazi Guns in Germany



Three American soldiers carry captured German guns and ammunition near Gurzenich, Germany, to test fire and familiarize themselves with enemy weapons. Left to right, Pfc. Paul L. Kumler, Duncannon, Pa., Pfc. Lawrence A. Totsky, Mayfield, Pa., and Pfc. Stuart L. Rouse, Kingston, N. C. They report American weapons superior to captured ones. Tests made in the United States with some of these guns proved them inferior in operation to the newer types of American guns.

Roosevelt Meets With Royalty



President Roosevelt has a friendly talk with King Farouk, (in admiral uniform), of Egypt, aboard a U. S. warship near Cairo, and with Haile Selassie I, emperor of Ethiopia. The result of the Big Three conference was explained to these rulers. Other visits were scheduled by the President before his return to the United States.

This Big Three Also Met—Japs



Adm. Marc A. Mitscher and Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, who took part in the directing of the invasion of Iwo Jima. Right shows Maj. Gen. Keller E. Rockey, Virginia Beach, Va., commanding general of the 5th marine division, which participated in the invasion of the Volcano islands. Mitscher is shown at left; Nimitz, center.

Patch Wins Honor



Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch, commander of the 7th army, is shown after being decorated by Gen. Charles de Gaulle with the cordon of a Commander of the Legion of Honor and Croix de Guerre with palm, at Saverne, Alsace, France.

Boy Spy Gets Life



Karl Arno Punzeler, 16, a Hitler youth leader, is shown as his sentence of death as a spy was changed to life imprisonment. Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges changed the sentence.

King Attends Meet



King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, is shown aboard an American warship, anchored at Great Bitter Lake, Egypt, when President Roosevelt was host to three kings during a halt there after the conference at Yalta. Emperor Selassie and King Farouk were also present.

Given Two Honors



Comdr. Harold E. Stassen, former Republican governor of Minnesota, who was named by President Roosevelt to the United Nations conference at San Francisco. He was recently decorated for his naval work.



Washington, D. C.

PLANS FOR PACIFIC WAR

It has all been kept very hush-hush, but top army officials have made a vitally important decision on war production after Germany's defeat.

Original war production schedules called for a 40 per cent cutback after Germany caves in, permitting a vast reconversion program and the early production of automobiles, refrigerators, radios and other goods.

However, the army plus WPBigs have now decided to keep the war machine rolling full tilt, not cutting back any but a few items until Japan is defeated.

Behind the decision is an important new plan to speed victory in the Pacific. Confidential war department surveys disclosed that it would take over a year to return European veterans, together with their equipment, much of it geared for winter rather than tropical fighting. Allied shipping shortages would make it a long job to crate, sort, repair and re-ship heavy equipment from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

In addition, the army survey disclosed that a lot of European equipment will be obsolete for Pacific fighting; would have to be rebuilt, taking valuable time. Instead, the new plan calls for bringing the men back at once, issuing them new equipment specifically designed for Far Eastern combat. Later, the army will bring back overseas war gear and use it for Pacific replacements.

This should speed final blows against Japan, and shorten the Far Eastern war by many months.

As a result, 1945 production schedules will probably be a billion dollars higher than those of 1944. The war department, which had a pile of telegrams two feet high canceling war contracts to be sent out the day Germany is licked, has now culled through them and may only cancel a few dozen orders.

MACARTHUR AND MARINES

The boys in the Pacific long have known about the rivalry between General MacArthur and the U. S. navy. Many are the wisecracks about MacArthur and the U. S. marines, land army of the navy. However, in only one case so far as is known, has MacArthur ever come up against one of these jokes face to face.

It happened on one of the Philippine islands a few days after it was taken and when MacArthur was inspecting a battery of marine artillery. Solemnly, he passed from gun to gun, making no comment.

Then suddenly as he came to one gun, he turned on the marine lieutenant in command and let loose the most terrific dressing-down that young officer ever had received. The air was smoky with epithets. The lieutenant at first stood bewildered. The gun was carefully polished. Everything was in place. Then he looked a little closer. Beside the gun an enlisted man had placed a sign. It read:

"With the help of God and a few marines, MacArthur retakes the Philippines."

The lieutenant thought at first that he would be busted. But several days passed and nothing happened. He is now back in the United States and the story can be told.

INSURANCE LOBBY

The insurance lobby is headed for trouble regarding its bill to exempt insurance companies from the Sherman anti-trust act. If the lobbyists aren't careful they will get a White House veto.

The bill passed the senate in a form which met with all-round approval. But in the house, the insurance lobby sharpened its ax and quietly tacked on some amendments which will not be acceptable either to the White House or, probably, to a majority of the senate. Chief effect of the amendments was to make it impossible to revive the anti-trust act regarding insurance companies, without a special act of congress.

Fair-minded Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming, who was quite willing to give the insurance companies a reasonable compromise, will fight this extra grab to the end. So will a great many of his colleagues.

CAPITAL CHAFF

General Franco's controlled Spanish press has been using the same propaganda line as Hitler regarding the recent Big Three conference. Despite the fact that American diplomatic relations with Lithuania hang by a thread, the Lithuanian delegation celebrated Lithuanian Independence Day even after the Big Three conference.

The war department's G-2 or military intelligence is being reorganized again, partly as a result of failures to spot Nazi troop concentrations preparing for the hulge attack.

The Mexico City confab is the most sorrowful Pan-American conference in history for Dr. Leo S. Rowe, benign, longtime director of the Pan American union. This is the first important Pan-Am policy held outside the confines of his union. Dr. Rowe says: "I cannot speak, but my heart is running over."

CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT

AGENTS WANTED

LADY WANTED in every community, both rural and city, to sell line of household necessities to her neighbors. Our line includes such wares as cheese and laundry soap. Liberal commission. General Products Company (U.S.), Albany, Georgia.

CITRUS FRUIT

Tree Ripened CITRUS FRUIT

A bushel of delicious tree ripened citrus fruit, containing both oranges and grapefruit from the famous Massey Florida Groves, direct to you, express prepaid, for \$4.50. Mail orders solicited. Fruit picked daily and shipped to you by fast express. Descriptive booklet and price list of various size packages sent free. Reference: Tropical State Bank, Sebring, Florida. Write to GUNNARD MASSEY'S GROVES Sebring, Florida.

Shoulder a Gun— Or the Cost of One ☆ ☆ BUY WAR BONDS

WNU-4 9-45

BARBS . . . by Baukhage

The supply of German wines has been reduced 37 per cent. That may be just propaganda to keep the G.I.s out of the country.

The Nazis say that Marshal Petain, now in a southern German town, displays "an undiminished agility of mind," but probably too Vichysted to leap back into French popularity again.

The WPB offers to help out farmers who need lumber for emergency maintenance and repair. And they need it these days when all you can get off the old block is a chip.

In a little over one week in February, 468 applications to hold conventions were turned down by ODT. Showing how the war has made the country unconventional.