

Washington Digest

UNRRA Test of Sentiment For World Co-Operation



Faith in Ideal Necessary to Continue Work of Allied Relief Agency After Reports Of Early Difficulties.

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The forces in Washington battling for world co-operation are finding the going tough. It is hard to get people to have faith in collective security when they witness such things as the breakdown of the foreign ministers' conference in London, Russia's reluctance to co-operate in the Far East advisory commission, Argentina's espousal of the ways of the dictators. At times it seems as though, internationally speaking, democracy were approaching the winter of its sores discent.

It is unfortunate that in the midst of this period of suspicion and anxiety, a yes and no vote has to be taken on a matter that may mean life or death, and to that extent, peace or anarchy, to hundreds of thousands of people in Europe. I refer to the 500 million dollar appropriation for UNRRA which has been winding a precarious way through congress.

By the time these lines appear, that appropriation which congress previously authorized may have been granted. There has never been much doubt as to its final approval. But the danger lies in the effect of proposed reservations.

This appropriation bill is considered a bell-wether. If it goes through unencumbered, it may mean that other measures affecting our relations with other nations are fairly safe and that such isolationism as exists in the country (and, therefore, in congress) is less than one-third of the whole.

It is true that there have been loud and emphatic demands that such knowledge as we possess concerning the atom and its potentiality be kept strictly to ourselves even though scientists say it cannot be less than common knowledge—even the "know-how" to turn it to military or commercial use—within a few years. But I believe that if you will submit to careful analysis the expressed sentiment of congress on this subject, it would reveal a line-up which takes little consideration of any international aspects of the use of atomic energy. In other words, the viewpoints so far expressed have differed as to whether this new force has been looked at as something to sell at home and the question has been whether it be produced under state control or by private enterprise. The question of internationalizing the bomb has remained in the domain of theory.

A look at the arguments for and against UNRRA and the reaction to them gives us a much clearer picture of tendencies, isolationist or otherwise, of the arguer.

U. S. Support Is Vital

When a congressman casts his vote "aye" or "no" on the bill to appropriate the money for UNRRA he is not simply virtually voting aye or no on whether we help feed starving Europe. If he votes no and the noes have it, there will be no UNRRA. True, all contributing nations put in the same proportion of their national income—1 per cent—but it so happens that 1 per cent of the national income of the United States is nearly three-quarters of the entire sum contributed. Your voter knows this. And he can't help realizing the UNRRA is symbolic of American participation in any world organization. Without this country's advice, consent and support, no world organization can exist. And likewise, with American support no nation can afford not to go along.

Another thing that the congressional voter knows when he votes on UNRRA is that it is far from perfect. He knows that the personnel, the efficiency, the standing of the organization have improved tremendously in the last few months since it has been able to get the personnel it required, which it couldn't get before because of the manpower and brainpower shortage due to the war. But he knows it is still hampered by its polyglot nature and he has to have faith enough in its purpose to make him feel that the risk of failure is worth taking. Because UNRRA, like any international organization, is everybody's baby, it can easily become nobody's baby. Each nation has been only too ready to criticize it, always excluding their own representatives' functions, of

course. UNRRA has suffered greatly from a poor press because the task it faced was well nigh impossible in wartime.

The bad news, therefore, overbalanced the good news as far as reports of progress on the part of the active, contributing countries were concerned. From the passive, recipient countries naturally there were plenty of complaints. These "sins of omission" were ballyhooed. The other side of the story was not. It was the sad and familiar tale of priorities, a story many a business man can tell. Even when UNRRA had money in hand for food required (although some of the contributing members are very slow to pay, the United States still was a little less than half of its allotment and authorization), it was impossible to get the combined food board, which decided who got what, to allot any to UNRRA until the armed forces, the domestic market, the lend-lease, and the liberated countries who had money to buy, got theirs. And even if the food was available, frequently there were no ships in which to transport it.

That situation has changed. Food is now being delivered to Europe. By Christmas it will be moving at the rate of half a million tons a month. But the memory of past deficiencies lingers and doubt as to future performance could easily be used as an excuse to defeat the measure unless one is really convinced that UNRRA's job is so important it must succeed. And there we get down to the nub of the whole argument. For to agree with the thesis that UNRRA's objective is desirable is to agree that the good of one is the good of all and the good of the other fellow is the good of the us—"us" standing for the United States.

It is easy to show that millions in Europe will starve this winter unless they get food from outside their own borders. It is easy to prove that in those countries which are UNRRA's concern—the ones which were invaded and which cannot pay for food—starvation will lead to disease, riots, revolt—and death. And we know that under such conditions, nations turn to totalitarianism and when that fails, to chaos. We also know that unless we help tide these people over, we cannot expect to sell them our surpluses because "you can't do business with a graveyard." Nevertheless the isolationist would respond, what of it? Let's stay in our own backyard.

Therefore, the voter, weighing UNRRA's past errors with its future potentialities, will vote for it only if he still believes that world co-operation is something worth taking a risk for.

So UNRRA becomes a test of how well this belief is standing the test of misunderstandings and disappointments on the diplomatic front which we have faced in the past weeks.

We hear a great deal about the difficulty of understanding the Japanese mind and many people have their fears as to how we are going to get along in the years ahead during which we will occupy the country and attempt a reconversion of Japanese thinking as well as economic life.

Recently I had a long conversation with an officer who had interviewed some of the more intelligent Japanese officers captured in the Philippines just before the surrender. Several remarks of one of these men illustrated the difficulty of reaching the enemy mind.

My friend asked the prisoner: "What did you think of our propaganda?"

"It made us laugh," the Jap replied.

"Be specific," my friend said. "Well, you sent us leaflets saying, 'Surrender: come over to our lines and receive plenty of hot food and cold water.' We laughed at that. We had plenty of cold water in the mountains. What we wanted was hot water."

Water, to a Jap, meant in this case a bath. They bathe in very hot water. That was what they wanted and couldn't get. To the Americans—water means, after the heat of battle, first, a drink.

BARBS... by Baukhage

Three wheeled "bugs"—little tear-drop cars run by an airplane engine—will soon be available at around a thousand dollars. More use for DDT.

About 800 "lasters" in 26 shoe factories were among the many strikers of the day. The question is how long can a laster last when he isn't laster?

The department of justice has over 97 million fingerprint cards. But they don't all belong to crooks. They've got mine among others.

The rubber manufacturers say there is going to be a revolution in sports wear, curtains and wall coverings. They can be coated with new substances which will resist not only water but oil and grease.

Six Thousand New Members Join American Legion



The American Legion has seen many thrilling things at its 27 conventions, but never a more stirring sight than was presented in the Coliseum in Chicago, as pictured above. Some 6,000 men and women veterans of World War II were sworn into the Legion while spectators held their breath as the candidates repeated the pledge. The Legion plans to recruit five to six million veterans of the last war to add to their ranks.

Leathernecks Visit Chinese Opera House in Peiping



Marine S/Sgt. John T. Kaiser Jr. of East Keansburg, N. J., center, and Cpl. Max R. Roemer of Kansas City, Mo., right, shoot the breeze with a couple of Chinese opera stars in a backstage "bull session" at the Peiping Opera house. Continuous performances were staged for the 1st marine division occupying the area by these Chinese trouperes. The leathernecks say they plan to master Chinese opera and bring it back to America, with hopes that it may become generally accepted.

Something New in Christmas Cards



Bringing a gay, warm touch to the most joyous holiday season in years is pretty Phyllis Creore of Rochester, N. Y. No Christmas card that can be casually tossed aside will come from her. Instead, shining tile greeting cards, which later find use around the house as hot plates and coasters, will be sent to the radio star's friends.

Eisenhower Visits Iowa Relatives



During his recent western trip, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower stopped off at Boone, Iowa, to visit with Mrs. Eisenhower's relatives. They are, left to right: Mrs. Joel E. Carlson, aunt of Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. John S. Dowd, mother of Mrs. Eisenhower, Mr. Carlson, Miss Carlson, General "Ike," Mamie Moore, and Mrs. Frances Dowd Moore, sister of Mrs. Eisenhower.

Legion Hears Nimitz



Adm. Chester Nimitz, USN, is shown as he addressed the American Legion convention in Chicago. The admiral was honored with the Legion's Distinguished Service medal.

Celebrates Birthday



Mrs. Adelaide Hill of Fort Atkinson, Wis., is shown as she celebrates her 107th birthday. Last year Vice Pres. Henry Wallace attended her celebration.

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

DREW PEARSON

EISENHOWER—DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN

WASHINGTON. — When Admiral Dewey returned triumphant from capturing the Philippines in the Spanish-American war, newsmen asked the conquering hero whether he was a Democrat or a Republican. The admiral wasn't quite sure which. That ended the Dewey boom for President.

Today, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower may be put in the same position as Admiral Dewey. Both parties are considering new blood for 1948. GOP leaders are convinced that, given a candidate who can win labor votes yet not alienate the Hoover conservatives, they can win. Obviously, Eisenhower is important presidential timber.

Popular impression is that Eisenhower is a Republican. He was appointed to West Point from the rock-ribbed Republican state of Kansas by GOP Senator Joseph P. Bristow. And nobody in those days could get anywhere in Kansas unless he was a Republican.

However, though it may be news to GOP leaders, Dwight Eisenhower put himself on record early in life as a Democrat. Furthermore, he was an energetic William Jennings Bryan Democrat, and in November, 1909, made a speech at the annual Democratic banquet held in Abilene, Kan. The other speakers were older and seasoned Kansas Democrats; but Dwight Eisenhower, then only 19, was picked to stand up with them and harangue the crowd. He did.

IKE'S OLD FRIEND

I am indebted for this information to J. W. Howe now of Emporia, Kan. Howe not only published the Abilene News, but was a member of the school board and knew young Dwight better than anyone outside his own family.

The Abilene News office was headquarters for a group of high school boys who came there to discuss their problems, talk sports and politics, read the papers and do odd jobs for the paper. J. W. Howe says of Eisenhower:

"Dwight liked to read the exchange newspapers from out of town. He never complained about working, seeming to take that for granted. In school discussions, he was always for the under-dog and contended we needed a somewhat better distribution of wealth."

William Jennings Bryan at that time had made many speeches in Abilene and the young folks liked to hear him. In fact, Bryan made some definite inroads on the republicans. The Republican party at that time was beginning to be split into two groups, led by Taft and Teddy Roosevelt. The fight in Abilene was bitter, and this was the situation when Dwight Eisenhower started out in 1909 to get the proper endorsements to enter West Point.

DWIGHT GOT TO WEST POINT

The Eisenhower family had no political pull—on the contrary, Dwight's father was listed as a Democrat, though he took little part in politics. Dwight himself was more active than his father, but whatever pull he had was with the Democrats. However, the factional Republican fight helped him. Editor Howe, the town's chief Democratic leader, advised Dwight to go to get the endorsement of Phil W. Heath, editor of the Abilene Chronicle and spokesman for the "Square-Deal" Republicans; also to get the endorsement of Charles M. Harger, editor of the Abilene Reflector, spokesman for the "Stand-Pat" Republicans.

Since young Eisenhower was not allied with either faction, Heath and Harger were very friendly, and gladly gave him their support. Thus, he was able to obtain not only the endorsement of the Democrats, but of both Republican factions—a real compliment to his standing in the community.

Eisenhower's first and only venture into politics occurred while he was taking postgraduate work at the Abilene high school, preparatory to West Point. Chief speaker at the Democratic banquet was George H. Hodges, later governor of Kansas. Dwight's subject was "The Student in Politics."

Two themes ran through the speech of the 19-year-old future commander of the Allied armies in Europe—preparedness and helping the under-dog.

According to the Abilene News: "To say that he handled himself nicely would be putting it mildly. His speech was well received."

A few months later, Ike Eisenhower was in West Point, where no one is supposed to be either a Democrat or a Republican.

EISENHOWER MERRY GO ROUND

In high school, young Dwight was called "Ugly Ike." One day a gang of schoolboys trooped into J. W. Howe's editorial offices to narrate how Ike fell off a horse. "The horse turned his head to knock off a fly and Ike just fell off," they said. . . . Dwight had come in walking on one leg and guarding his arm. He just grinned. Actually, the horse had stepped in a hole and fallen, but Ike never tried to explain it to the other boys. . . . The Eisenhower gang at school had odd traits.

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