

Washington Digest

Nation Suffers Scarcity Of Competent Teachers

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—Less than a year and a half after the question of which would triumph, nazism or democracy, was settled, the United States is being forced to meet a crisis in its competitive struggle to maintain its way of life.



Baukhage

Two years ago the prediction, based on trends of that moment, was made that "our school system faces one of the greatest crises in its history—American schools have lost 200,000 competent, well-prepared teachers since Pearl Harbor." (That was in June, 1944.)

At that time only one out of a hundred school teachers held "emergency certificates"—certificates issued to persons admittedly not in the "competent, well-prepared" class.

Today, according to an estimate made in an article in the October issue of *Coronet* magazine, one out of every eight hold such certificates and out of the 200,000 teachers lost to war industries, the draft and other wartime activities, *Coronet* finds at least 75,000 of those teachers "lost" for good. Stuart Chase, economist, sets 500,000 as the number needed before the present teaching staff of the nation is brought up to what he calls "adequate."

Ralph McDonald, executive secretary of National Educational Association in Washington, who has been busy trying to wake the educational world to its danger, quotes reports that Russia today is spending 20 per cent of her comparatively low national income on education, while we spend only two per cent of ours for the same purpose.

And not satisfied with what is now being done, the Soviets are demanding still higher standards of "ideological and political" knowledge for their teachers. The party paper, *Izvestia*, announced in a recent article that students from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and other Slav countries were being brought into the institutions of higher learning in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities.

The office of education of the United States government is fully aware of the danger facing our public schools. Its functions are strictly limited, however, to the acquisition and distribution of information. Actual promotional activities are forbidden and improvement of conditions rests fundamentally with the states and local communities. The office of education is doing all it can. Full co-operation in the gathering of data is provided and for the last six weeks or so special efforts have been made to bring information on this subject up to date for distribution. Actual statistics of the varying needs of various communities now are being compiled.

National Education Association, which began an intensive campaign two years ago to assist in the recruitment of teachers, improvement of working conditions and higher salaries, has renewed its efforts as a result of action taken at the organization's convention this July. A slogan which they have adopted runs: "We must have federal aid before we can have equalization of opportunity." But federal "interference" in America's school system has always been a bogey.

Cheat Pupils Out Of Proper Education

Meanwhile, as Charles Harris says in the previously quoted *Coronet* article, "we are cheating our boys and girls of their right to the kind of an education they desire," by permitting this teacher shortage which has closed more than 7,000 class rooms and over-expanded classes so that individual attention to pupils has virtually vanished. Many vital subjects have been dropped.

The worst phase of the situation is the turnover. As is evidenced by the number of "emergency certificates" issued, the standard has fallen sharply. Harris mentions one school which permitted a convict to be released from jail because no one else could be found to teach the pupils. I was told of a case where a teacher teaching sixth grade pu-

pils had never had more than a fourth grade education herself. Low pay is, as it has always been, one of the chief difficulties. It is a strange paradox that the business and industrial groups, who are most anxious that the principles of democracy and free enterprise be thoroughly taught, are the greatest competitors of the schoolhouse.

Here in Washington the minimum wage of teachers is below that of lower grade clerical assistants and file clerks in the government. In industrial centers, the gap is wider. In business, there is more of a demand today for college-trained personnel. Many teachers, both male and female, who went into the services, held college degrees, and when discharged were eagerly snapped up by businesses requiring higher education.

Chambers of commerce, disturbed by the threat of untrained minds in their communities, have appealed to the government to promote special teachers' programs as a part of the veterans' re-training programs but here again the federal government would be treading on thin ice. That isn't in the law. Private institutions and the community itself are responsible for this type of effort, and congress always puts its foot down when there is anything that even hints at federal activity in connection with the public school system. The office of education leans over backward to keep away from anything that might be labeled "interference."

Not only poor pay but also lack of social life drives many prospective teachers into other fields. That is something that only the community can change.

If the teacher's position is not changed for the better and the public school system is not restored to its normal place in our democracy we will have lost the one thing without which democracy cannot grow. Democracy cannot renew itself, it must be renewed in the hearts of each new generation. Otherwise, weeds aplenty will take its place.

Slips Over Fast One on Censor

One of the few joys left to a newspaper correspondent in one of the foreign cities where censorship still prevails is trying to beat the censor. One of the most amusing "beats" of this kind was scored by Drew Middleton writing from Moscow for the *New York Times*.

Perhaps it fooled many American readers, too. It reads:

"Ilya Ehrenburg, writing in *Izvestia*, continued his long series of articles on the United States, a group of articles which for depth and understanding are superior to anything written on these lines since the works of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson."

The dispatch was passed by the censor who didn't know that Dodgson was the real name of Lewis Carroll who wrote, "Alice in Wonderland," some of the most delightful nonsense ever penned.

I do not know whether Ehrenburg's articles as published in Moscow differed from those which he published in the United States, but I must say that some of them reflected life in America as truly as the scene at the Mad Hatter's tea party followed the pattern of an ordinary tea party in England. You remember that there was a table set under a tree in front of the house and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it; a Dormouse was asleep, and the other two were using him as a cushion, resting their elbows on it and talking over its head.

"Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind." The Hatter was the first to break the silence. "What day of the month is it?" he said, turning to Alice. He had taken his watch out of his pocket and was looking at it uneasily, shaking it every now and then and putting it to his ear. Alice considered a little and said, "The Fourth."

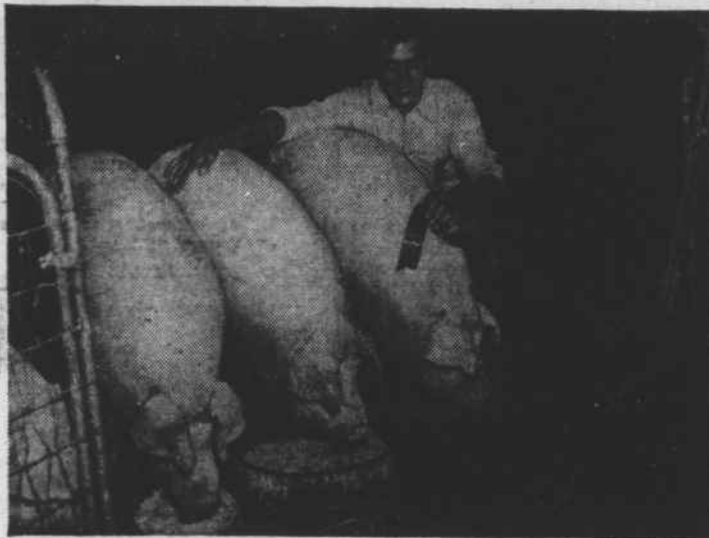
"Two days wrong!" sighed the Hatter. "I told you butter wouldn't suit the works," angrily looking at the March Hare.

"It was the best of butter," the March Hare meekly replied.

Although Middleton's comparison between Dodgson and Ehrenburg was probably well-chosen, I doubt if the censor would have passed the comment had he ever read "Alice in Wonderland."



BREAK WORLD'S NON-STOP RECORD . . . Crew members of the "Truculent Turtle" navy twin engine, bomber which landed at Columbus, Ohio, after a 11,236 mile non-stop trip from Perth, Australia, smashing old mark by 3,300 miles. Left to right, Lt. Comdr. R. H. Tabeing, Jacksonville, Fla.; Comdr. W. S. Reid, Washington; Comdr. E. P. Rankin, Sapulpa, Okla., and Comdr. Thomas D. Davies, Cleveland, pilot and flight commander. Trip took 55 hours and 17 minutes. Navy officials ordered the crew to land at Columbus instead of attempting try at Washington.



WINNING PEN OF HOGS . . . Leo Hulbey, 18, of Chatsworth, Ill., exhibits his winning pen of three Chester Whites at the Chicago Junior market hog show and sale. In addition to first ribbons, young Hulbey received the Pillsbury award. With more than 1,000 hogs exhibited from four states, winners faced stiff competition. Hulbey and hundreds of other 4-H club boys and girls have made a paying business out of their various farm enterprises.



SAN ANTONIO HIT BY WORST FLOOD IN HISTORY . . . San Antonio citizens are occupied by trying to make some sort of order out of the chaos caused by the worst flood in the history of the city. Nearly a score of lives were lost and damage was reported at six million dollars. Photo shows crowd on bank looking at the wreckage of a bridge which was swept away and was washed along for a quarter of a mile by the raging flood waters.



STUDENTS STRIKE OVER G.I. RULING . . . Students of Glassboro, N. J., high school are shown picketing after they went on strike in protest of a school board rule forbidding students 19 years old or over to play on the school football team. The rule directly affects students who enlisted when they were 17 and have now come back to finish their education. Striking students want the ruling changed so that the veterans again can play football.



SUPERIOR GENERAL OF DOMINICAN ORDER . . . Father Emanuel Suarez of Spain, professor of canon law, newly-elected superior general of the Dominican order pictured following his arrival at Castelgondolfo to be received by the Pope.



BOB HOPE WINS HIGHEST AWARD . . . Bob Hope, left, "personal court jester" to the millions of U. S. servicemen on battlefronts of World War II, shown as he received the American Legion's highest award, the Legion's Distinguished Medal.



LEO GETS HIS SHARE . . . Apparently aware of the crisis which has made millions of Americans meat-starved is Leo, star boarder at the Bronx zoo. The cagey king of beasts retreats to a corner to enjoy his meal of the scarce food.



CLEARED OF NAZI CHARGE . . . Constance Drexel, 51, once indicted by a federal grand jury as a traitor to the U. S. for broadcasting Nazi propaganda, is shown as she arrived at New York City cleared of all charges made against her.



TIGER TURNS BOUNTIFUL . . . Gen. Claire Chennault, retired commander of China's famed Flying Tigers, and later commander of the U. S. 14th air force, is back in China to head an airline for flying relief supplies in China.



FAR EASTERN REPORT— Here's what members of the house military affairs committee reported to General Eisenhower, following their return from an inspection of our military bases in the Far East.

1. Morale of our Far East occupational troops is being endangered by the army's delay in sending wives and families to officers and enlisted men.
2. The army is doing little to set up facilities for the proper housing of army wives and children who want to join the troops. On Okinawa, for instance, surplus army stoves and plumbing supplies—badly needed in quonset huts where army families will be housed—have been sold to the Chinese.
3. Another demoralizing factor is the shortage of cigarettes, fresh fruit and vegetables.

Eisenhower promised to look into these facts immediately.

Congressmen reported that an estimated 350 Jap soldiers are still at large on the island of Okinawa, living a Robinson Crusoe existence in the hills. American authorities are not seriously troubled. . . . A lone Jap fugitive was picked up a couple of months ago on Saipan, after having been at large for over a year. When asked where he had been getting water on the very dry portion of the island to which he had been confined, the Nip replied that he had gone at night to a large house in an isolated sector, drinking from the tap and filling his canteen. The home was that of the American commander.

The returned congressmen are worried that lower ranking commissioned officers are "taking the Japs to their hearts." Congressmen fear that many occupation officers have forgotten that the Japs were our enemies only a year ago. Japs, the congressmen say, have not forgotten their dead, but some of our men have forgotten the Americans who died battling these same Japs.

One of MacArthur's difficulties is the great shortage of Jap-American interpreters. Result: In Japanese towns without any interpreter reports on conditions, written by Jap authorities, are sent to U. S. headquarters as official reports. Plans to recruit 50,000 Filipinos for our army have fallen through because of lack of money. The present goal is 35,000, with the training now under way.

Worst areas in the Pacific for troop morale are Korea and the Aleutians. Korea is the center of political intrigue and, because it is at the end of the supply lines, the food served our troops is hardly better than field rations. In the bare, treeless Aleutians, the big wish of U. S. troops is for a 12-month rotation system. They now are sent on a two-year hitch with scant chance to get back to the comparative gaiety of Alaska.

STALIN'S WAR OF NERVES

Most interesting fact about Stalin's recent widely broadcast and widely-hailed-as-conciliatory statements to a London newsman is the date. The date was September 24. For on exactly the same day Stalin was telling the world that there was no danger of another war, he was sending a note to Turkey which sang another tune.

The note to Turkey was not made public until four days later. Thus Stalin publicly put fears to rest, while simultaneously warning Turkey that she must yield to Russia on the Dardanelles and that she must permit Russian troops on Turkish soil. If not, the implied threat was war.

Thus, despite Stalin's attempt to woo the world, his aims remain exactly the same. Furthermore, they remain exactly the same as those of the czars before him. Finally, they remain today, with his allies, exactly the same as with his old sparring partner, Hitler.

For, in 1940, when Russia and Germany were under a non-aggression pact, the same Molotov now dickered in Paris went to Berlin to dicker with Ribbentrop for terms under which Russia would come into the war against England. The terms Molotov wanted were the Dardanelles, Iran, Iraq, the Balkans and the mouth of the Red sea. Hitler wouldn't give these terms, and Russia finally was forced into the war on the side of the Allies, not against them.

Now that the war is over, Stalin and Molotov are right back where they were in 1940—trying to get the Dardanelles and other long-range Russian objectives.

CAPITAL CHAFF

Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson picked an ideal time for his vacation, the moment of the Wallace-Byrnes feud. He was the happiest man in the administration to have missed the fight. . . . Sighed Mildred Eaton, one of Wallace's secretaries, when informed her boss had resigned, "We haven't got through unpacking from our last move yet." . . . Mrs. Truman refused to use a White House car while vacationing in Missouri, driving her own car in Independence.

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BARBS . . . by Baukhage

Secretary Anderson says we ought to be glad the hogs and cattle are on the ranges putting on more weight—even if we aren't.

Don't be effusive with dogs, just polite. Too much familiarity may breed resentment, and mud on your front.

The Archbishop of Canterbury told his motorcycle escort that it thrilled him to go through red lights. A good American traffic cop could get a bishop through the eye of a needle.