

Looking at WASHINGTON

Is Russia Really Seeking Peace Through Adjustments Or Is It Only Propaganda?

Because of what Secretary of State George C. Marshall calls a "confusion of publicity and of statements and publications relating to our actions and attitude toward the Soviet Union," Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith recently conferred with Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov in Moscow for the purpose of impressing on the Soviet Government the true nature of the policy of this country toward the Soviet regime.

The possibility of a conference between the United States and the Soviet Union has been much discussed since Moscow made public the fact that the United States Ambassador had discussed differences with Mr. Molotov. The Soviet Government, over the radio and without a direct reply to the United States Government, declared that it "adopts a positive attitude toward the wishes of the United States Government as expressed with the proposal to begin, in this connection, a discussion and settlement of differences existing between us."

According to the Soviet radio, Ambassador Smith said that despite Soviet hostility to the European rehabilitation program the United States had not lost the hope "of such a change in policy which would give . . . the opportunity of finding a path for restoring good and rational relations" between the two countries. Furthermore, the Ambassador is quoted as saying: "As for the United States, the door always remains open."

The Soviet Government, through Mr. Molotov, also released a lengthy statement, defending its course and denying that its policy has been the cause "of the present unsatisfactory state of Soviet-American relations." The statement denies that the Soviet Union interfered in the internal affairs of the countries of Eastern Europe and alleges that the program in Europe reveals that the United States "on its part permits interference in the internal affairs of other states" which the statement continues "cannot fail to evoke serious objections on the part of the Soviet Government." Blame for the present situation is placed upon the policy of the United States.

Before the people of the United States become excited over the alleged willingness of Russia to hold a conference for the purpose of settling difficulties, they might recall that in 1941 the Japanese government started similar conversations which were in progress when they delivered their secret attack upon Pearl Harbor.

Moreover, it should be understood that the United States made no proposal to Russia that the two nations hold a conference. All that Ambassador Smith attempted, in his conversation with Mr. Molotov, was to deny any aggressive intentions on the part of this country toward Russia and to explain the official attitude of this country towards the trend of international developments.

Various efforts have been made to interpret the motives of the Soviet Union in giving widespread publicity to the matters discussed in Moscow. Some observers believe that the Soviet Government, being convinced that the American policy will continue and become stronger, seized upon the conference to bring about a settlement with the western powers.

This conclusion involves many assumptions, including a realization on the part of the Kremlin that its world drive will not succeed and, in fact, has already been successfully countered. This is probably going too far but it is quite possible that the rulers of Russia think the time has come to talk.

However, skeptics take the view that, at best, the interchange means nothing more than Russia is seeking a breathing spell while studying the situation and searching for soft spots upon which to apply further pressure. Obviously, from past experience, even the willingness of Russia to enter into discussion does not mean that the two nations would be able to agree upon anything.

Trade Agreements Act, Vital To World Trade, Faces Fight In Congress

If Congress fails to take action before June 12th, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act will expire. The chances are that the measure will be extended for one year but its advocates are not at all sure that the renewal will be "without crippling amendments."

As everybody knows, the past experience of tariff legislation in Congress has presented a log-rolling procedure, accelerated by the energetic activities of lobbyists interested in protecting some favorite item. Consequently, there has been general agreement that the legislative body is not the agency to set the tariff rates upon specific items, although it should enact legislation in general terms.

The purpose of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act was to set up machinery by which the United States, in cooperation with other countries, could gradually remove trade barriers.

The idea behind the effort is that the economic difficulties of nations often lead to pressures which result in war. Obviously, if every nation could be assured of equality of economic opportunity throughout the world, there would be no cause for friction and, in the opinion of many persons, the standard of living of all peoples would be gradually raised.

The United States, as the foremost exponent of tariff walls, was not in a position to use a broad axe on the tariff barriers which barred the importation of foreign goods. It was recognized that other nations, as well, had erected tariff walls and through quotas, currency regulations and various restrictions, had attempted to counteract the tariff policy of this and other countries. It was believed, however, that the nations, acting in concert and considering their joint interests, might be able to agree upon gradual reductions which, in the long run, would stimulate the development of world commerce.

Since the end of World War II, President Truman has repeatedly called the Reciprocal Trade program an essential part of this country's policy which seeks to advance world prosperity and peace through cooperation with other nations.

Secretary of State George C. Marshall has pointed out, upon numerous occasions, that the Trade Agreements program has never been so important as now to us and to the rest of the world.

Both seek to establish it as a fixed and permanent policy of this country, so that the other nations of the world will understand that, in cooperating, they are not being involved in a system of concessions which might end with every change of administration in Washington.

The bill which has been reported to the House by its Ways and Means Committee provides for a one-year extension of the Act, but gives to Congress the power to veto future trade agreements which fail to come within limits that ought to be established by a re-constituted and independent U. S. Tariff Commission. Hearing of the action of the committee, Gerard Swope, chairman of a committee working for Reciprocal World Trade, predicts that the action of the committee will represent a "Black Friday in the annals of American world leadership" unless public opinion causes a change in the policy set out.

Representative Bertrand W. Gearhart of California, however, says that the decision of the committee represents a fair compromise, insisting that the one-year limit "indicates no more of a step toward high trade barriers than did the Democratic extension of two years in 1943." However, it should be noted that he added that "any new administration that might take office in 1949 should formulate its own policies."

This last statement indicates that Mr. Gearhart contends that, in the event of a Republican administration in 1949, the new administration should have the right to fix its policies. This, in general, is undoubtedly a correct statement.

However, the effort to extend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act for a full three-year extension does not represent an effort to prevent a new administration from fixing its policies. It represents an intelligent effort to establish a Reciprocal Trade Treaty program as a bi-partisan, national policy. Such a policy, when established, would hardly be subject to changes with every shifting administration in Washington and would mean something.

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Health and Beauty

By Dr. Sophia Brunson

Army Doctors Concerned about the Atom Bomb

The Army has counseled the population to keep calm if atom bombs should start falling on American cities.

The Medical Corps said in a statement that if an A-bomb should hit a city:

"It is by no means true that the entire population would be wiped out, nor is it true that nothing could be done to help the survivors."

Then, alluding to a subject over which there has been considerable quiet worrying among the military, the Medical Corps quoted its Col. James P. Cooney as saying:

"Mr. and Mrs. America have been so frightened by the information they have received to date, that if a bomb were dropped on one of our cities tomorrow, mass hysteria would probably cause the unnecessary loss of many lives."

Many lives may be saved by widespread knowledge among doctors of treatment methods and by a general understanding of what happens in an atomic explosion, said the Army.

The Army conceded, "There is no known method of protecting those in the immediate neighborhood of an atomic bomb when it explodes."

In addition to the tremendous blast of the explosion, the atomic bomb, unlike any other explosion, kills with radiation. The radiation produces serious injury between one and a half and two miles.

While "there is not much even a medical man can do about" victims of the radiation produced in the split-second explosion of the bomb, aid can be given to those suffering from radioactive dust, water or other material rendered poisonous by the nuclear fission explosion.

Good Seed Need Help To Produce Good Crop

Good seed are important but they alone won't produce a good crop, says Dr. R. P. Moore, director in charge of the North Carolina Crop Improvement Association.

Members of the association who are specializing in the production of high quality certified hybrid seed corn realize the importance of good planting seed on North Carolina farms, Dr. Moore said. These seed producers are now busy in their efforts to

visit the English village where he was born.

"I suppose the people, here, Tom, have heard of the honor that has been conferred on me?" he asked an old school fellow.

"Yes," was the gratifying reply. "And what do they say about it?" "They don't say anything," was the reply. "They just laugh."

When the buyer of hybrid seed corn finds both a blue certification tag and a yellow planting instruction tag on the bag, he not only receives evidence of high quality seed, but also instructions as to how the seed should be utilized for best results. By saving the tag the buyer may use the factors for converting yield of corn produced from 50 feet of row into yields per acre.

After having worked his way up to a high government position, a man

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