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The Impersonality Of The Poltroons

THE act of dynamiting a school or a house of worship itself chokes decent people with unspeakable horror and anger.

But what adds horror to the inherently horrible as bombings continue to echo around the South is the sinking awareness that these crimes have no aim, no direction, no pattern, no purpose — thus no reality.

Yesterday's bombing of the school at Morgantown, West Va., where no tensions of any kind have existed, brings home that sinking awareness. The sheriff of Monongalia County, where the covert aborigines planted their bomb, expressed this sense of incredibility and unreality to reporters: "This is the last place you'd expect something like that," he said. "Whites and colored have lived side-by-side peacefully here for years."

Unquestionably there is much more to the bombing of schools and churches than the mere fact that the South has entered a period of crucial adjustment to a concealed, but all the more relentless revolution. To the shrunken minds of school-blasters, it may well appear that they are real patriots in some messianic "cause" or "battle" for their social beliefs. In connection with the recent synagogue dynamiting in Atlanta, police discovered a self-styled "Confederate" underground at work. The assumption of an honorable name for a pack of poltroons had for the vast majority of southerners a transparent absurdity. Many justly shouted their indignation. Yet an element of the clammy horror we feel in face of these scattered explosions lies in realizing that those who are capable of such crimes are also capable of cloaking them shabbily in symbols of honor.

One of the graces higher civilization has brought us is a sense of honor and of personal responsibility, emancipating us from the dark preventives of totem poles, taboo-serving, and amulets against an impersonal and irresponsible destiny. Yet with each bombing the chilly sensation of impersonality and irresponsibility grows more overwhelming. A people with fundamentally decent ideals feel themselves slipping helplessly down into new primitivism.

Anybody Keeping Track Of The Time?

PROGRESS — or lack of it — on a workable plan to consolidate the school systems of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County reminded us today of one of the late Alben Barkley's favorite yarns.

It was the story of an unreliable clock owned by the Veep's aged uncle. Asked how he told time by it, the old fellow said: "When the hands stand at 3 o'clock and it strikes eight times, I know it's 20 minutes to 4."

Consolidation study committees representing the two school boards appear to be keeping track of the hour in an equally mysterious way. At any rate, our own trusty wristwatch indicates that time is running out if officials hope to complete work on the merger in time to submit it to the 1959 General Assembly.

Even after the preliminary details have been thrashed out they will still have to be scrutinized in detail by both boards and the public. This is not something that can be thrown together overnight by a pair of clever lawyers. Too much is at stake — namely, the soundness of a master plan for the future education of our children.

There is an advantage, too, in having specific legislative proposals in the hands of the Mecklenburg delegation before it leaves for Raleigh. Legislators themselves ought to be given time to study the legal questions thoroughly. This will permit introduction early in the session so as to avoid the mid- and late-session rush. Many fine bills die miserable little deaths in committee simply because their sponsors tarry too long in introducing them.

Hence, the concern of Brock Barkley, City School Board attorney, and Douglas Aitken, chairman of the board's study committee, is appropriate. We hope their sense of urgency is transmitted to all concerned.

There is not a moment to lose.

Long Day's Journey Into Enlightenment

SCORE one for public opinion. A flurry of controversy over the jailing of mental patients in Mecklenburg has convinced County Commissioners that Something Should Be Done.

What? Well, something Commissioners have asked for suggestions from a committee of experts — including, incidentally, one expert auditor to give just the right touch of practicality to the deliberations.

It is gratifying to know that the problem is at last getting the serious attention it deserves. At the same time, it is more than a little outrageous that primitive conditions and policies have been allowed to exist for so long in Mecklenburg and, for that matter, all over the state and nation. The situation here is only one aspect of what is essentially a national scandal.

Mecklenburgers will await the committee's recommendations with interest and concern. Once proposals are drafted, they will expect County Commissioners to give them earnest and sympathetic consideration. This is clearly not a problem that can safely be filed and forgotten. For, once aroused, public opinion can be a mighty worrisome thing.

Have no fear. It's aroused.

Today's Veterans Will War Against War

TODAY, as Veterans' Day, was hailed at Charlotte's Square and across the country.

But it will also be reflected, as Secretary of the Army Wilbur Brucker observed the other day, that the camaraderie of fellows-in-arms in America is of recent development in this nation's history. Before World War I, from which American fighting men returned to form the first great association of veterans, war-making, to the deeply pacific American people, was something contradictory and to be shunned along with "entangling" alliances.

Not even the Civil War, which involved Americans against each other, created the deep impression of life under arms. The swashbuckling Confederates who by legend caught up their sabres and bade their ladies adieu beneath the magnolias together with their adversaries from the North, had little awareness when they started and little more when they finished that war was extremely different from fox-hunting in the Georgia swamps or the Shenandoah. They fought in an age when even Europe was at peace, though at the outset of the revolution a nationalist Germany under Bismarck was to stir. They fought when armies still quartered for the winter, and when in war's off-season the gentlemanly officers of opposing armies wined and dined together.

It took the trenches and the gas of France, after 1917, and finally the total mobilization and the atomic weapons of 1944 to drive home the fact that war is a matter now of complete commitment. It is unsparing in its demands upon every comfort of the hearth or the state. There have been eras when war had some of the amenities of game and sport, but those who have fought and those who have not now realize that push-button weapons have made war anything but sport, a grim and guileless sweep which promises to devastate everything with no traditional room for heroism or patriotism.

Today's veterans know with Secretary Brucker that war is something to be warred against because its glories will be few if any.

From The Manchester Guardian

ONE MAN, ONE TOT

AT first sight the idea of Mr. Khrushchev's fighting the good fight against the demon drink may seem a little paradoxical: in the past he and vodka have been conspicuously good friends. Perhaps one should remember the proverb about setting a thief to catch a thief, and the one about the reformed rake. Anyway, this particular fight is one that urgently needs to be fought, as any visitor to the Soviet Union will agree when he has seen the queues outside the bars and the drunks on the street in the morning. But limiting customers to one glass of spirits in each restaurant seems a rather odd way of going about it. "If there are people who like their five tots, they will have to go to five restaurants," Mr. Khrushchev says, with the air of Marie Antoinette pointing out that cake is still on the menu. This will make a healthy stroll for the stiliyagi in Gorki Street, no doubt, but what about all those poor mujuhiks out of the steppes? What happens when the collective farm's annual dinner comes round, with all those toasts to be drunk (in one gulp each, and the glass tossed over the shoulder) to international amity, the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and the rest of it? Imagine, say, five toasts in five restaurants each 25 versts apart. "They will sober up as they go from one to the other," says the experienced Mr. Khrushchev. They certainly will. By the time they get round to drinking a toast to Mr. Khrushchev they may be too sober even to want to.

Mr. K. (At His Very Small Desk) Applauds 'Status Quo'

By WALTER LIPPMANN

Editors' Note: News Columnist Walter Lippmann has just returned from a trip to Russia which took him deep behind the Kremlin walls, even into the office of Mr. Khrushchev, where so many of the world's crucial events today originate. He is writing a series of four articles on what he heard and saw. This is the first.

WASHINGTON

DURING the last two weeks of October, my wife and I were in the Soviet Union, almost all of the time in Moscow. We traveled as tourists although we had discussed our visit with the Soviet Embassy in Washington and it had been agreed in advance that my main purpose would be to understand Soviet foreign policy in relation to the United States. Except for a bit of sightseeing in Leningrad, we did not go anywhere else in the vast expanses of the Soviet Union, and I know nothing at firsthand about the internal condition of the Soviet Union. But from a long interview with Mr. Khrushchev himself, supplemented by talks with Soviet officials and Soviet editors, I think I came to understand better than I had before what are the mainsprings and the controlling ideas of Soviet foreign policy.



LIPPMANN
He Took Notes

A FREE DAY

I shall begin this series of articles with an account in two parts of the interview with Mr. K. I have to divide it because the account is long. For the interview covered much ground and lasted for two hours. I must set down the circumstances. For the first week of our visit in Moscow there was no definite appointment. Mr. K. had been away in the south and when he came to Moscow he was involved in the negotiations with Field Marshal Amer who, representing President Nasser, negotiated the agreement which deals with the Aswan Dam and no doubt with many other things. Between the departure of the field marshal and the scheduled arrival of Mr. Gomulka and the Polish delegation, Mr. K. had, it appears, a free day. An appointment was fixed for that day at 11 in the morning in his office in the Kremlin.

We were told to be ready at our hotel 20 minutes in advance and that an official from the state committee for cultural relations with foreign countries would come for us in a car. Tourists cannot drive into the Kremlin precincts but after our car had been identified, we were led by a police car to the door of a building in one of the inner courts of the Kremlin palaces. There we were met by an officer who escorted us to an anteroom next to Mr. K.'s office. There was no one else in sight. Unlike the offices of any other chief of government that I have ever visited, there were no guards, there were no other people waiting, there were no secretaries carrying papers around, there were of course no newspaper men, and there was none of the bustle and bustle which usually prevail in the outer rooms of busy and important officials.

NO SIGN OF HURRY

Somewhere and somehow Mr. K. must do a great deal of work and must see a great many people. But there was no outward sign of it. When we were shown into his office, which was on the dot of 11 a.m., he was quite relaxed, had none of the symptoms of a busy and preoccupied man, and indeed he acted as if he had all the time in the world. In the course of the interview it was evident that he wanted to talk about Soviet - American relations and about nothing else. But on this subject he seemed ready to talk as long as I wanted, provided I kept asking him about the broad issues and did not try to get into the details of any particular negotiation.

His office in the Kremlin is a long, rectangular room with a long, rectangular table for conferences, and at the end what seemed to be a very small desk for the ruler of a vast empire. The desk, moreover, was cluttered with gadgets, rather like President Franklin Roosevelt's desk in the White House, and with a large model of what I suppose was a jet airplane. At the interview, which took place at one end of the long table, there were besides Mr. K. himself his interpreter, Mr. Troyanovski, the son of the former Soviet ambassador to Washington, Mr. Yuri Zhukov (no relation of the Marshal's), who is the head of the state committee for cultural relations with foreign countries, my wife and myself. There was no stenographer present nor was there any visible recording machine.

EVERYONE TOOK NOTES

But Mr. Zhukov took notes, my wife took notes, Mr. Troyanowski made memoranda for his translations, and I, when I remembered to put my mind on it, took some notes also. There is, therefore, no official record, and at the end of the interview, while we were drinking the mineral water which his doctor had ordered him to drink, I asked Mr. K. to tell me under what conditions I could use what he had said. He waved aside the question, saying I could do what I liked with what he had said, but that he hoped I would not do any damage to Soviet-American relations!

As this left me with my conscience as my guide, I feel that the right thing to do is to report the story of the interview with explanations, but without editorial argument. Because there is no written record, I shall refrain from attempting to quote Mr. K. directly, except for certain phrases which I wrote down at the time in my notes. On the other hand, I must set down as true an account as I can of what I understood him to say and of what I believe he meant.

WAVE OF THE HAND

After the preliminary courtesies Mr. K. waved his hand at me and said he was ready to answer my questions. I began by saying that relations between our two countries had deteriorated since the summit meeting at Geneva in 1955, and would the Chairman comment on this.

Relations, he said, have not become worse. They were bad in 1955. They are bad now, and they have not become any better. The question, he added, is whether our relations are to be frozen where they are now or are to become better or worse.

I reminded him that at the time of the Geneva meeting there had been hopes of much better relations.

Yes, he said, but in the West these hopes were based on a false premise. Dulles and Churchill—or as he put it "that old wolf Churchill" — had hoped that after Stalin's death there would be a change in the internal policy of the U.S.S.R., and that the country would turn away from the strengthening of its "socialist achievements." When they saw that the successors of Stalin were not going to liquidate the Communist system but that these successors did want to relax the tension on the basis of the status quo, the West reverted to the tactics of the Cold War. They had hoped to win us over but we shall never be diverted from the path of socialism. Never!



KHRUSHCHEV
He Talked

At the next interval I seized the chance to ask Mr. K. to tell me what he understood by the "status quo." The answer to this crucial question, it soon appeared, is in his mind a complex one, and the bulk of the interview which followed was a gradual unfolding of what the phrase means in his mind. It will, I think, help the reader if at this point I interrupt the narrative and summarize what, as I reflected on the whole interview afterwards, seemed to me to be the main elements in his conception of the "status quo."

NO CHANGE BY FORCE

The simpler part of his conception is that there should be no change of frontiers by military force. He illustrated this by saying that in the cases of China and of Vietnam the issues between the two parts of the country were internal and "civilian" — and, therefore, were not to be treated as international questions. In the case of the two Germanys and the two Koreas, changes of frontier—presumably by the union of the two parts—were to take place only by "mutual consent."

I shall come back to the German question later on. But first, I must set down what is the more important part of his conception of the "status quo." In his mind, the social and economic revolution now in progress in Russia, China, and elsewhere in Asia and Africa is the status quo, and he wants us to recognize it as such. In his mind, opposition to this revolution is an attempt to change the status quo. Whereas we think of the status quo as the situation as it exists at the moment, he thinks of it as the process of revolutionary change which is in progress. He wants us to recognize the revolution not only as it is but as it is going to be.

MILITARY POWER

There is another very important component in his conception of the status quo. This has to do with the balance of military power.

Judging by what he said, and by what was implied in what he said, I would describe his view of the existing military balance of power as follows. It rests, I feel reasonably certain, on his confidence that the Soviet Union has mastered the intermediate and short range missiles to a point where it can dominate with them Germany and Western Europe, Turkey and Iran. I do not know, of course, whether his confidence in these missiles is justified. But there is no doubt that he assumes their existence in his thinking, and that they have now become as the saying goes, a principal instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

On the other hand, nothing that he said implied that he thinks the U.S.S.R. has long range missiles which have broken, or are about to break, the existing military stalemate with the United States. His conception of his military position in relation to the United States is that neither country can defeat the other in a direct conflict, but that the American forward positions, particularly in Germany and Turkey, can, because of the development of the rocket, no longer be defended. He feels, therefore, that American policy rests on an obsolete estimate of the existing balance of power.

GERMAN NEGOTIATION?

I am now resuming the story of the interview itself. After he had talked about the status quo, and about no changes of frontiers by force, and about the need of mutual consent in the German question, I asked him whether he would agree to free negotiations between the two Germanys and whether, as one of the four occupying powers, he would accept an agreement negotiated by the two Germanys themselves. To this he replied quickly — too quickly as it developed — that he would agree to this, and that it would be best if the troops of the occupying powers were withdrawn before the negotiations were concluded. This would bring about "a more normal condition."

I was not convinced that he had meant what he had said, perhaps because he had not fully understood what a Westerner would mean when he talks about free negotiations between the two Germanys. So I asked him whether he really meant that the occupying powers would accept unconditionally the result of negotiations between the two German governments. To this he replied that the occupying powers would, "of course," abide by the Potsdam agreement which states, he said, that Germany should never again be in a position to disturb the peace. He left me with the reasonable certainly that if the Western powers proposed a free negotiation by the two Germanys, the Soviet government would not be willing to accept it.

POTSDAM

His mention of the Potsdam Agreement brought him quickly to his complaint that the United States is violating the agreement by contributing to the remilitarization of Germany. This carried with it the implication that there could be no reunification of the two Germanys as long as West Germany was to be once again a military power.

This led deeper into the German question. He discussed it at length and with more passion than he showed on any other subject. Out of it came what was for me a very interesting disclosure of how his mind works on the German question. Describing what he said, we must read it in the context of his military assumption that the Soviet Union has now mastered the intermediate range missiles.

GERMAN THREAT

Americans, he began, seemed not to realize the danger which their present policy of rearming Germany may well bring down upon them. What is this danger, I asked? It is, he said, that if a new war is unleashed — we shall come later to his conception of how a new war might be unleashed — Germany might once again turn to the East against the West. Why? Because if Western Germany engaged in a war against the East, the U.S.S.R. could quickly destroy Western Germany—with its missiles. But if the Soviet Union encouraged Germany to turn against the West, the Germans alone will be much stronger than England, France and Spain combined.

THE REAL MUNICH

This led him on to say that the situation was much like that on the eve of World War II. How? Much is said in the West about Munich. But the Western peoples do not understand Munich. They think that Czechoslovakia was sacrificed at Munich in order to appease Hitler and keep him from going to war. But in fact, said Mr. K. with passionate conviction, Munich was arranged by British and French conservatives who wanted Hitler to attack Russia. To induce him to do that, they gave him Czechoslovakia, which is "an arrow aimed at the heart of Russia." The Soviet Union, he said, had been ready in 1938 to join in the defense of Czechoslovakia against Hitler, and had actually alerted its army.

After Munich, said Mr. K., Stalin realized the danger to the U.S.S.R. as a result of the Western action. Hitler, too, saw what this action meant to the Russians and, believing that he could finish off Britain and France if the Soviet Union were induced to remain neutral, Hitler offered to make a deal with Stalin. He intended, of course, to attack Russia when he had finished with the West. But Stalin, for his part, saw a chance to weaken Hitler before the coming attack on Russia by encouraging him to make war in the West.

The point of Mr. K.'s historical explanation, which he volunteered without being asked any questions about it, was that another German-Soviet pact was at least as possible today as in 1939—indeed more probable since a German attack on the Soviet Union had now become "suicidal."

(To Be Continued Thursday)

Dropping The Pilot



Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Ike Expects To 'Live' With Congress

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Eisenhower's nephew, Mike Gill, popped into the White House election night and found the President watching a western movie.

"My God, Uncle Ike!" blurted Mike. "Aren't you watching the election returns?"

"I've lived with a Democratic Congress for four years," mumbled the President. "I can live with them for two more."

Same Apathy

Except for flashes of interest, Ike displayed the same apathy the following night when Vice President Nixon dropped over to hold a political postmortem. Ike's attitude was that of an elder statesman who is through with politics and is relieved to be out of it.

Nixon claimed the election results proved that the Republicans need fresh faces—young, attractive, aggressive candidates. He cited his own potential presidential rival, Nelson Rockefeller, as an example. Nixon added slyly that he had sent Rockefeller a warm telegram congratulating him on his New York victory.

Nixon also discussed the discouraging GOP defeats in the farm states. Without saying so outright, he made it clear that he considers Secretary of Agriculture Benson a political liability.

The President's attitude made equally clear that he has turned the political reins over to Nixon.

Why The Landslide?

During any week of the recent election campaign, this writer covered a cross-section of the country, from coast to coast. It was not difficult to predict how the political tide was running. There are the main factors, which like apparently does most know about, which are making it run that way.

Recession Unforgiven

The recession would have been forgiven if there hadn't been so much talk, first, that there was no recession, second that it would be over in March. Ike knew that it wouldn't be over in March because his experts reported it would not be over until October. The public knew what the experts said because the public reads the papers. The public just doesn't like to be fooled.

War Danger

The crisis over Quemoy could have been forgiven if there hadn't been so much talk about unleashing Chiang Kai-shek and so much criticism of the Democrats for war in Korea. People remembered Ike's "I will go to Korea" statement during the 1952 campaign and wondered why he didn't do something drastic in 1958 to stop danger of war three miles off the Chinese mainland.

Vicuna, Etc.

The Goldfine case would have caused much less attention if Eisenhower hadn't harped so continuously on Democratic mink coats, barns and deep freezes. The public remembered his very effective 1952 campaign slogan: "Korea, Corruption, and Communism." And the public didn't see much difference between a mink and a vicuna coat, a deep freeze and a $2,000 rug.

When Oct. 4, 1958, passed with the United States still not launching a satellite anywhere comparable to Russia's people began to doubt the military infallibility of the President. Prior to Oct. 4, 1957, they had considered all military matters safe in his hands. He was the expert. But the Russian sputnik shook that faith; and the series of political moves better known as "Operation Soothing Syrup" actually did not soothe nearly as much as the White House thought.

Golf & Bridge

The American public likes to picture its President working hard, concentrating on affairs of state. People get tired of seeing him play golf or go on three-day bridge-playing bouts when vital problems are pressing, and when a school board from Tennessee with its school bombed because it tried to obey the law is refused an interview with the President. Golf and bridge hurt Ike in this campaign far more than he realized.