

(1955)

On the last day of last February, I retired from the Foreign Service of the United States after 44 years of service including over 29 years as Chief of Mission. I was Ambassador at a variety of Posts. Since that time I have had time and opportunity to consider how the practise of diplomacy has had to adjust itself to many changes in an ever changing world.

1911 might be described as the horse & buggy age, 1955 as the jet plane age. When I was in Colombia in 1928, mail from the Department reached us in about a month. Mail from Washington to Bogota now arrives in a matter of hours. At Paris I could get Washington on the telephone in a few minutes. At Cairo it took longer, but only minutes longer. Now-a-days we have to move & often we have to move fast, sometimes too fast.

There are some unchanging principles in the practise of diplomacy, telling the truth is one. That does not mean telling all a man knows, but when he makes a statement he should tell the truth. Aside from the morals of the matter, in the long run truth-telling pays dividends. Furthermore the longer I live the more convinced I am of the Providence of God in human affairs.

That's exactly the opposite of what the partisans of the Iron Curtain think I say I do. To them a statement is true if it is useful. There is no other value; & there is no place for God or His Providence.

45 years ago the interest of the American press

Even the American Government in Foreign Affairs was not very great. We didn't have to care. We were getting along very well, we were prosperous, we were happy. We didn't export very much & we didn't have to import very much. Over the course of the years all that has changed, changed gradually. It is true. How our Foreign Relations look very large indeed. For instance, if we don't export, our standard of living will inevitably go down. We need friends. We need all the friends we can make. This is especially true in the face of the Iron Curtain.

45 years ago the interest of the American people in Foreign Affairs was less than that of the government or of the press. Only a few men & women had an interest in what was going on beyond our own shores. Now the interest of the majority is enormous. I have recently had occasion to travel considerably around the United States making commencement addresses and other speeches to various groups & organizations, as well as receiving medals & degrees. I came into contact with large bodies of men & women. I was struck by their enlightened awareness of our foreign relations. Even ten years ago this was not so. 20 years ago the interest was only a beginning; thirty years ago hardly a beginning.

This state of affairs brings responsibilities to our government. It is in the interest of our government to let the people know as much about our foreign activities as can be done without giving comfort to the enemy; but we must stop

at the point where it gives comfort to our foes. After some experience in International Conferences I say advisedly that a one-time adage "covenants openly arrived at" if literally carried out would do the cause of peace in the world much harm. Also we must bear in mind that a promise means something to us but means nothing to the countries of the Iron Curtain unless it is useful.

The United States at this juncture is the most powerful nation on earth. That brings more responsibilities. We must be sure what we want, sure what we need, sure what our duties are, where our interests lie but above all we must try to be sure that our direction is in God's way. We cannot stand aloof from the challenge that the Iron Curtain poses to the very fundamentals in which we believe. We have no sanctuary on earth from this conflict. The battle must be won in places near-by as well as far-off places where millions of men have no bulwark of democratic experience. And in the final analysis it must be won here at home.

That is why I am more than ~~deadly~~ serious when I bring to your attention the problem of how we are to survive.

Since the last war the Communist empire has brought about 600,000,000 people under police state control. Since the last war the free world has brought political independence to about the same number. But in those countries, most of which previously were under ~~colonial~~ control and have had little

experience in self-government, danger exists.

The disappearance of absolute monarchs or colonial administrations in many such nations has left a void. Millions of the people are illiterate and are living on a level of bare existence.

Their newly-won independence in itself is a good one. But it came at a time in history when a great empire based on slavery is trying to gobble up the whole world, and that is what makes the danger. In our own self-interest we cannot afford to see the Communist imperialists take over these vulnerable nations one by one.

The conflict in which we are engaged is to preserve our freedom & to do that we must prevent the loss of vulnerable Asia and Africa, as well as all-important Europe and South America. The goal is clear; the means are more difficult.

Thanks to our power the enemy has not been willing to risk an all-out military struggle. It may well be that this factor of our power has been the most important contribution to the preservation of freedom and independence of some of the fledgling nations which need time before they will be able to stand solidly on their own feet. If we know this, we cannot necessarily expect all of the other nations so benefitted to believe it.

And so there are political leaders in some countries and people who advocate avoidance of trouble by burying their heads in the sand. The trouble is that while their heads are buried they can be devoured. Among these

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areas of the world there are also people who believe that we Americans want to dominate them.

Therefore the course we are pursuing is a delicate one, in which we must make every possible effort to rally the free nations to dedicate themselves to the preservation of freedom and the dignity of man. It is necessary for us to make the issues clear. But we cannot try to dictate nor to dominate.

In America there may be an inclination to think after we have been of aid to another nation: "We have helped them; why don't they do what we want, especially since it is in their own interest too". But newly-independent peoples are inclined not to do what we want them to if they have the idea that it is a favor to us in return for help we have given them. The problem is to show that the goal is a common one & that what they need to do is in their own interest -- for their own sake, not for ours.

Despite the pitfalls along the way & the delicacy required in rallying peoples of the world for an effective fight for freedom, I am happy to report my opinion, which is that we have made progress. Some of the very difficult problems, which have beset the free nations & have in the past opened the door wide for Communist intrigue, have been solved. It is not within my province to discuss all these but you know of a number of examples. In Egypt I was concerned with a very serious dispute between Egypt & our ally, Great Britain.

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While the dispute was between these two nations, there were far reaching overtones, & the situation caused serious instability which became very dangerous for the Near East. Our interest obviously was to see a peaceful & honorable settlement.

After the revolution which brought a young group of officers to power in Egypt, the problems were approached realistically. First the disputed Sudan was given the right of self-determination, & this agreement among the British, Egyptians & the Sudanese opened the way for a solution of the next problem - the Suez Canal Base. Negotiations on Suez were touch and go for some time, and all ^{of this} made a very busy time ^{for us} in the final discussions both the British & the Egyptians exhibited the kind of statesmanship required to produce a settlement satisfactory to both sides. Under these terms, the Base reverts to Egypt but can be used by the British in case of an attack on the Arab States or Turkey within seven years after the evacuation of the British troops is completed.

The problem was not simply an international one. It had delayed for many years the very large efforts required if Egypt were to develop its economy in a manner necessary to assure a stable government. Now that the Sudan & Suez disputes are settled, the Egyptian Government can turn its attention to the tasks of enabling the people to make a better living. In Egypt, this means saving more water from the Nile to put more land under

cultivation. As I left Egypt, the job was being undertaken vigorously. We are giving some assistance. I cite Egypt as an example. If Egypt can progress sufficiently in enabling its people to make a better living, Egypt can remain a free nation & thwart the enslaving ideology. It is in our interest to see this happen there. In many other countries in somewhat similar circumstances

Immediately following the signing of Suez and Sudan agreements the British and the Egyptians ^{we} ourselves were astonished at the rapidity of the change in attitude of Egyptians in particular & the Arabs in general to the British. The attitude changed from an all time low to one that could be termed friendly. Had agreement not been reached on the Sudan & Suez, serious trouble would have broken out which might have spread over all the Near & Middle East with ~~dire~~ consequences for all our interests & especially for our all-important petroleum responsibilities.

It is my opinion that if the free nations endure in strength, human nature is such that men on the other side of the Iron Curtain sooner or later will break out of their bonds. There is an indomitable nature in man which demands freedom. It may be suppressed for generations, but it is inevitable that the shackles some day will be broken. And that is our hope -- to maintain free world strength until that happens.

Having so recently left the Foreign Service, I want to say that we citizens must rely heavily upon the men & women who serve us abroad to help keep other nations on the side of freedom.

Again, 45 years ago it was not very important whether or not we had a first class Foreign Service. Now if we don't have a top-flight group of men & women who serve us abroad, disaster will come to all we hold dear.

Often I have been asked what career I might choose if I had my life to live over. My answer has always been the same -- the Foreign Service.

At various times over the years there have been reforms of the Foreign Service and counter reforms and time and again the men in the field have been depressed and discouraged. We can admit that some of those personnel policies have given cause for depression and discouragement. I was Assistant Secretary of State some 22 years ago & one of my jobs had to do with personnel and I know how hard it is to be objective. There is one thing I can say & that is that, in spite of difficulties and even inequities, the good man nearly always comes to the top.

In the old days diplomacy was a matter for kings & princes & counts & was much of a family affair even if its operations were occasionally accompanied by murder & kidnapping. It had to do above all with the fate of dynasties & there

was much a - do about marriages & dowries and the like. To-day it does nothing of the sort. Diplomacy to-day has to do with politics of course as it always did, but just as important now are economic angles and labour and culture & we must take into account other specific matters such as aviation, and petroleum and industry and agriculture and education. We must have men who are specialists in these fields and men who talk difficult languages. Diplomacy grows more complicated every day.

Formerly public opinion didn't count very much (as it doesn't count to-day in the Soviet realms) & the rulers didn't give it much consideration (as they don't in the Soviet realms). To-day in the free world public opinion is king. Our government can go only so far as public opinion will let them go & no farther. While on the one hand our government must keep the public informed, on the other hand it is equally important for the government to know what the people think.

It has been said that the personal element in diplomacy is not as important as it used to be. As the stakes are higher now, and more and greater interests are involved, the personal element never loomed so large. Time and time again it is one man in Washington or in the field who by his prestige or his wisdom or just his personality, makes or unmakes or re-makes history for good or for bad, to the advantage or the detriment of his country and eventually

the world. I know because I have done it many a time. No amount of despatches - writing or telegraphing or lecturing or newspaper interviews can do that.

Man cannot live alone; nor can nations. In isolation no people will thrive. Nations need to trade if they are to live abundantly. They need cultural interchanges, exchanges on labor, scientific cooperation, news/information exchanges, educational exchanges. Diplomacy is needed to channel all that.

Diplomacy can never be complacent. It involves strife, determination & sacrifice, wisdom & intelligence & skill & tact. Protocol in effect means nothing but discipline & order. There is a hierarchy in all of nature which derives from the natural law.

We are often asked what are the primary personal requisites for a good diplomat. They are always the same, intelligence, wisdom, poise, shifl, common sense and above all a conviction that he knows what he is doing and that his cause is a good one. I need not swell on obvious ones like patriotism, loyalty, honesty, integrity.

Diplomacy is also a challenge, a continuous challenge. There are few dull or unoccupied moments for a diplomat at an important post. Office hours play a part, but most of the real worth while accomplishments in the field of diplomacy are achieved out of the office, at dinner or

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lunches or over drinks or riding horse backs or at tennis or golf or talking taking a walk or on archaeological expeditions. In other words, diplomacy is an all-time engrossing career. There is no place for the sluggish or the laggard in modern day diplomacy.

As I have remarked before, modern diplomacy has to do with many things besides political relations and political rivalries. It has to do with oil, for instance. The nation which controls no oil is a very sorry nation indeed, while the nations which control huge oil reserves count themselves as happy & fortunate. Diplomacy is often involved in ways & means of acquiring and conserving the required oil rights and oil concessions.

Perhaps all this calls for a final definition of diplomacy as simply the intelligent & honest & practical way of protecting and advancing a nation's interest & of conducting its foreign relations to that nation's honor and prosperity, for the good of the world and finally to the glory of God.