

A Policy-Making Secretary of State

An Intimate Message From Washington

Registered in U. S. Patent Office

CPYRGHT

By Neal Stanford

WASHINGTON

There's the story that when Secretary Dulles moved into the State Department his first act was to call in his aides, write out a list of 20 duties facing him as Secretary, and then announce as he crossed out the first nineteen: "I'm going to confine myself to this last: making policy."

This story may well be apocryphal. But time has testified to its basic truth. The fact is the present Secretary of State has no taste for or interest in the managerial, administrative, mechanical, and personnel aspects of his job as head of a department of 11,000 persons. So he got a "chauffeur-mechanic" undersecretary to handle mechanical and personnel problems, and has left him strictly alone. What he loves to do, and is undoubtedly best at doing, is making policy. No Secretary of State since John Quincy Adams has been so deliberately and thoroughly trained for just that: making foreign policy.

Secretary Dulles both advises and influences the President in the conduct of foreign policy to a unique degree. His recent address in New York on "The Evolution of Foreign Policy" was a major pronouncement, possibly a revolutionary pronouncement, with its assertion that hereafter the United States would "depend primarily upon its great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our choosing."

What is of interest here is that it was Mr. Dulles, not President Eisenhower or Defense Secretary Wilson, who called the turn on what is more a security or military problem than a diplomatic decision. Literally, in his New York speech, Secretary Dulles was only "announcing policy": But it is no secret that he played almost as big a part in making the policy he announced as in announcing the policy he made.

The Eisenhower-Dulles relationship is something unique in recent American diplomatic history. President Roosevelt's Secretaries of State were definitely overshadowed by their chief. Hull was not a maneuverer in the diplomatic field — though very effective in the defense of freedom. Stettinius was a very inadequate mouthpiece. President Truman by contrast let his Secretaries of State make, announce, and direct foreign policy almost single-handed. His trust in and admiration for Secretaries Marshall and Acheson were obvious and deeprooted.

The Eisenhower-Dulles relationship falls somewhere between that of President-to-Secretary practiced by their immediate predecessors. Mr. Dulles is Secre-

tary of State in fact as well as name—but he is not being delegated a President's responsibility.

It was Secretary Dulles who really persuaded the President he had to make a fight for Charles E. Bohlen as Ambassador to Moscow if the morale of the Foreign Service wasn't to fall to zero. It was Mr. Dulles who gave the President the A-B-C's on constitutional law that set him unalterably against the original Bricker treaty-making amendment. And it was Mr. Dulles—or better, the two Dulleses (for the Secretary's brother is head of the supersecret Central Intelligence Agency) who assured President Eisenhower the post-Stalin U.S.S.R. had too many internal problems to make new Communist aggression probable—making a "new look" at policy possible.

There is no question but that Secretary Dulles has been stepping up the forcefulness of his policy statements as he became accustomed to his No. 1 post in foreign affairs. He has warned the French to get on with ratification of EDC or face a possible American "agonizing reappraisal" of its European defense strategy. He has told America's allies that they had to seriously deserve whatever future aid was provided. He has put Moscow and Peking on notice that if there's a new aggression the United States will hit back where, when, and how it considers most appropriate.

It is certain the Secretary would not be talking with such force—throwing warnings, advice, and even threats about in this manner if he was not persuaded that was good strategy. Yet there is an anomaly and possibly some danger in taking such diplomatic stances just as America's leadership of the free world coalition is challenged by the turn of world events and our own policies.

The threat of Soviet aggression is less and so our allies are less fearful of an attack and consequently less pliable to Washington's views. Washington is also reducing its economic, if not military, aid abroad, and so is in not as good a position to get the foreign cooperation it wants. Also, the United States is no longer fighting the free world's battle in Korea that automatically gave it the right to call the tune for the coalition.

Yet Secretary Dulles is speaking with more, not less, force and frankness to our allies. If he is successful it will be one of those calculated risks he is not unwilling to take—such as the mounting dependence on retaliation to keep peace, and the growing dependence on atomic weapons for national security.