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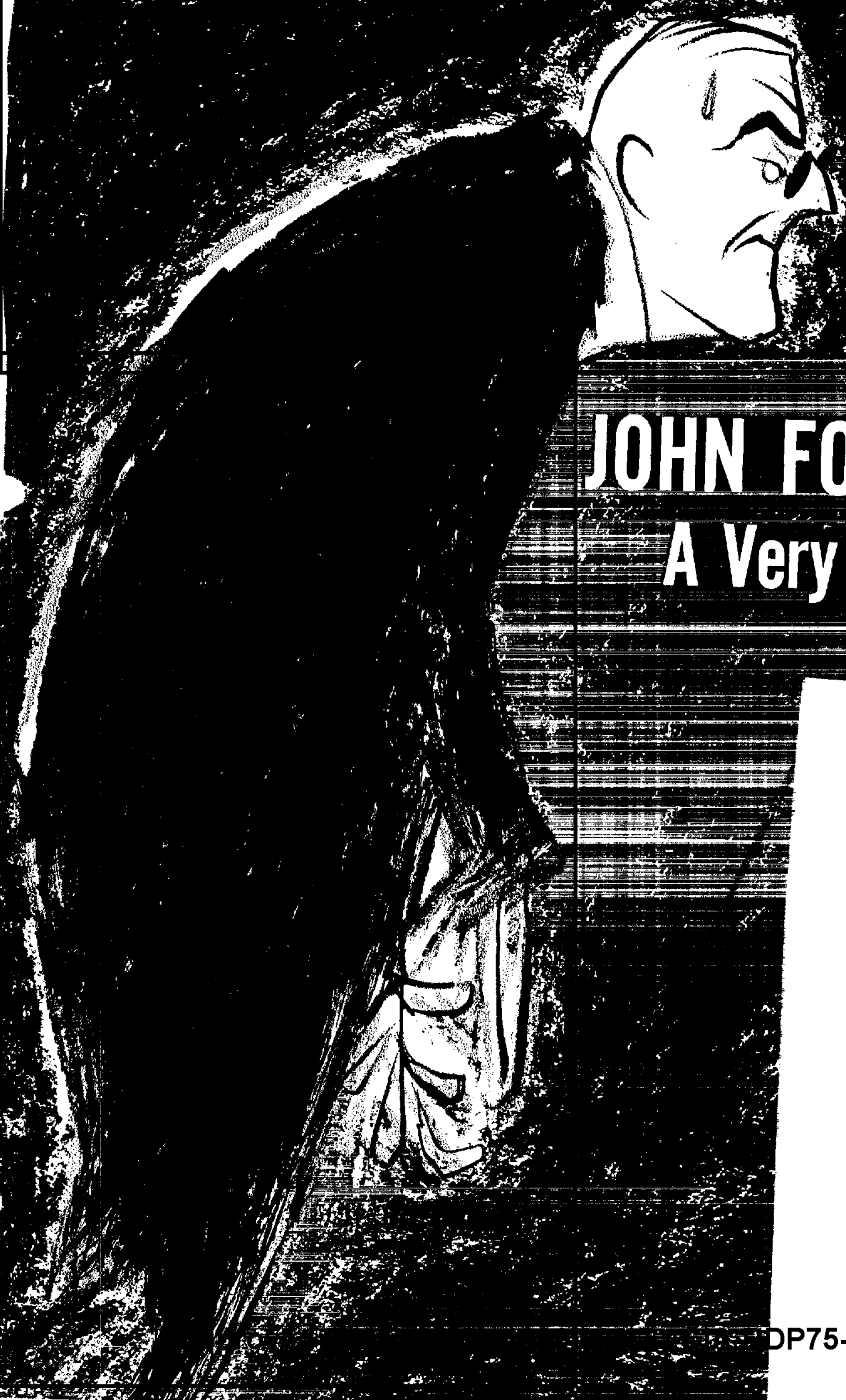

JOHN FOSTER DULLES: A Very Complicated Man

Joseph C. Harsch

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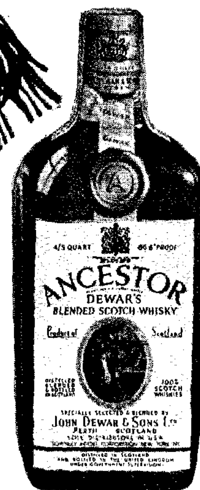

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Harper's MAGAZINE

JOHN FOSTER DULLES:

a very complicated man

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JOSEPH C. HARSCH

A Washington columnist for the *Christian Science Monitor* and NBC news analyst examines the character, career, and ambitions of President Eisenhower's most controversial —and intriguing—Cabinet officer.

JOHN Foster Dulles' father was a Presbyterian clergyman, daily and earnestly concerned with "righteousness" and "duty." Both his maternal grandfather, John W. Foster, and his uncle, Robert Lansing, were men who achieved prominence, wealth, and an identical title: "Secretary of State of the United States."

Matching the achievements of his grandfather and uncle, without breaking faith with his father, is not a task which our present Secretary of State consciously assigned to himself in his boyhood. Yet this difficult ambition is woven unmistakably into his career—and it has helped make him the most intriguing and the most controversial figure in the Eisenhower Administration.

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Dwight D. Eisenhower has called Mr. Dulles the greatest Secretary of State he knows anything about. Richard Nixon once said, "Isn't it wonderful to have a Secretary of State who stands up to the Russians?" But to Randolph Churchill is attributed the remark that he "smells of nonconformism," and the Democratic view is typified by Senator Henry M. Jackson's contention that Mr. Dulles is "the original misguided missile, traveling fast, making lots of noise, and never hitting the target."

Assessments of Mr. Dulles seem usually to fall into one or the other of these extremes. One of the many curious things about him is the fact that he tends to arouse either approval bordering on veneration, or disapproval ranging close to moral contempt. Those who have worked closely with him in business and in government seldom view him dispassionately. This is surprising, when it is noted that in his personal relations Mr. Dulles is gregarious, sociable, a genial dinner-table companion, lucid in exposition, reasonable and open-minded in discussion.

British diplomats—who were prepared to dislike him after their relatively successful relations with Dean Acheson—will tell you privately (never publicly, for that would do too much violence to a British folklore presumption of original Dulles sin) that "he is very good in private negotiations, and much better than Acheson, you know, on the colonial question."

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Mr. Dulles himself has probably contributed more than any one to the confusion and controversy which surrounds his career. Because of him, "liberation," "unleashing," "massive retaliation," "agonizing reappraisal," and "brink of war" have become clichés in the current vernacular of Washington. They are often used with a connotation of an empty pose.

He is more vulnerable to criticism from his own publicly spoken record than from any other source, because in his official life he is given to overstatement, oversimplification, and less than total candor—flaws which are usually absent from his private conversations.

A substantial explanation of the dualism between his public and private behavior is that he progressed from being a small-town preacher's son to his present eminence by way of the legal profession. For years his daily task was to make the best case he could for his client. He is reputed to have been the most highly paid corporation lawyer in the history of New York City. A lawyer is not expected to believe the partisan side of the case which he presents for his client. He does not carry it into his personal beliefs or private conversations. Nor is consistency expected. He may take the opposite side of the same argument on behalf of his next client. Such professional habits are not easily shaken off.

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COURTROOM DIPLOMACY

MR. DULLES earned his position in the legal profession against odds. He got his job with the law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell at fifty dollars per month on the insistence of Grandfather Foster and against the better judgment of the senior partners. The partners consented to give him a chance, but they took negligible interest in a boy from the back country who had slight connections with the big families or big corporations—and who, besides, had taken his law at George Washington University, not at Yale or Harvard. The fact that he had graduated with the highest marks ever granted at George Washington was no compensation in their eyes for his other shortcomings.

The quality which broke through the resistance of Sullivan and Cromwell and made him, ultimately, the senior partner was his ability to make a case for a client. He did it so successfully that not until he reached the age of sixty-one did he experience what could be called a check to his career. Then, in 1949, he ran for the Senate, and was beaten by Herbert Lehman.

The technique of making a case for a client has persisted into his conduct of American diplomacy, and not surprisingly it has involved him in instances of embarrassing inconsistency. When he was in Pakistan last March, for example, he argued to members of the SEATO alliance that it pays to be an ally of the United States—citing facts and figures to prove that allies get better treatment at the U.S. Treasury than non-allies. Seven days later he was in non-allied Indonesia saying, "there is no connection whatsoever" between our financial aid and membership in a military security pact with the United States. He cited as evidence the fact that India and Ceylon receive such aid although they are not allied with the United States.

In between he stopped over in New Delhi and tried to persuade Prime Minister Nehru that he had not been unfriendly to India when he had previously referred to Goa, that much debated Portuguese enclave on the Indian coast, as "a province of Portugal."

Another striking example of "making a case" was provided by Mr. Dulles on February 24, 1956. The "new" Soviet diplomacy had for months been running rings around Western diplomacy. Soviet arms had gone to Egypt, Soviet "trade" delegations were roving as far afield as Latin America, Pakistan had agreed to send a trade mission to Moscow, and the Administration had entangled itself in the on-again, off-again fiasco of tank shipments to Saudi Arabia. Yet Mr. Dulles asserted: "At this moment in Moscow they are having to revise their whole program. They have failed."

This was followed by one of the rare explosions of Senate, and public, criticism of Mr. Dulles (there had been an earlier explosion over his "massive retaliation" phrase). It evoked an explanation at the State Department that Mr. Dulles' doctrine of Soviet failure was based on a comparison of the Soviet position in 1948 with the Soviet position in 1956. Now the West was undoubtedly better off in 1956 than it had been in 1948—but what critics had been talking about was the appearance of a Western decline from 1953 to 1956. Mr. Dulles had built his case for Soviet failure on a convenient selection of dates which gave him the advantages of the Marshall Plan, formation of the NATO alliance, successful resistance to aggression in Korea, and the refurbishing of Western military power—all pre-1952 Truman-Acheson achievements, which Mr. Dulles had tended to minimize in the 1952 election year. He may have felt, however, that his client had changed, after the Democrats regained control of Congress in 1954.

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Certain inconsistencies between remarks made by Mr. Dulles during the 1952 campaign and in a 1949 Senate speech were raised at the Senate hearing on his confirmation in January of 1953. Mr. Dulles explained that "under our Constitutional system we have a general election every four years . . . one side presents his case, and the other side presents the other case, as two lawyers do when they go into court. At that stage the two parties are not judges and they are not judicial. In my opinion they should not be . . . but when that time is past, then I believe we should try to work together on a bipartisan basis. . . ."

When *Life* magazine came on the streets in early January of 1956 with an article based on recorded conversations with Mr. Dulles which pictured him as almost the sole bulwark of the peace, Democrats concluded that Mr. Dulles' quadrennial release from judiciousness had come around. Even Vice President Nixon commented dryly that "the rest of us can take care of the campaigning."

Another characteristic of many distinguished lawyers is the lack of an administrative flair. (This is, perhaps, natural, since they ordinarily work alone or with a handful of close associates, and thus have little chance to learn the techniques of managing a large organization.) In Mr. Dulles this trait seems to be pronounced.

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Sullivan and Cromwell partners recall that when Dulles was senior partner he exhibited more than usual aversion to administrative work. The senior partner normally oversees this part of the firm's operations—as the present senior partner, Arthur Dean, does. During the Dulles term, however, one of the other partners took over this work by mutual and tacit consent.

Shortly before taking office as Secretary of State Mr. Dulles expressed a wish that he might have an "ivory tower" office off in some obscure corner of the White House where he could just think about foreign policy, and not have any formal connection with the vast, complex, hierarchical structure of the Department of State. He did not get his wish, but his subordinates have sometimes suspected that in his own subconscious mind he did. It is frequently said that he carries the foreign policies of the United States around in his coat pocket. He seldom delegates policy responsibility and it is noteworthy that—as in the case of the Saudi Arabian arms shipments—no one was quite sure what the policy was until he came back from his Duck Island vacation retreat.

The once-powerful secondary officials of the Department have tended to become merely executors of his policy (when they are informed of what it is) and the rank of Ambassador has steadily declined in importance during the Dulles incumbency. When there is any important negotiating to be done Mr. Dulles usually goes himself, leaving his Ambassadors no function higher than that of reporters. Even this residual function has been of declining relevance, since Mr. Dulles has his own views of each situation clearly in mind. Ambassadorial reports bear upon Dulles' thinking, but seldom influence it; and, it is said, they never cause a reversal of a strong Dulles view. Ambassadors have been called home for consultation without being consulted by Mr. Dulles.

During the Acheson period, policy was generated out of the impact upon each other of many and diverse minds in the Department. Mr. Acheson set up and used an institution called the Policy Planning Staff. He frequently overrode its conclusions, but he did not assume that his thinking alone could generate foreign policy. Today the Policy Planning Staff has fallen into disuse; Department policy begins and ends in Mr. Dulles' own mind. Dulles' policy is influenced heavily by the Senate. It is sometimes reversed by the President. It is adjusted within the limits of tolerance of public opinion. But the machinery of the State Department plays the least of the roles in the process.

The fact that Mr. Dulles is one of the most traveled Secretaries of State in history is a direct result of his unfamiliarity with the use of an administrative apparatus. To him, his staff of experts, his far-flung foreign service, appear to be not an instrument, but a baffling encumbrance from which he disengages himself in so far as he is able.

James F. Byrnes—another lawyer—exhibited a similar inclination, although to a lesser degree. When he was negotiating with the Soviets in Moscow in 1945, one of his aides (now an Ambassador) suggested that the delegation ought to send a report of its work back to the State Department. "Why?" Mr. Byrnes inquired, in genuine bewilderment. "What would be the point of that? I'm here."

Mr. Dulles also is capable of assuming that wherever he happens to be at the moment, there too is the Department of State. In his case, however, it comes closer to being true.

A related quality is his facility for disentangling himself from embarrassments. In 1947 he had nominated Alger Hiss, with the highest recommendations, for the post of director of the

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Carnegie Endowment. When the pumpkin papers were unearthed in August 1948 he and Dean Acheson were both vulnerable to criticism because of their past associations with Hiss; Mr. Dulles was, if anything, more so because he had provided Hiss with refuge at the Carnegie Endowment after Hiss had been maneuvered out of the State Department under Mr. Byrnes.

A MATTER OF THEOLOGY

AT ONCE Mr. Dulles relieved Hiss "of all active duties" at the Carnegie Endowment. He appeared as a prosecution witness at both of the Hiss trials. He contradicted Hiss' testimony on five specific points during the final stage of the second trial. By the day of the verdict, January 21, 1949, he was ready to say:

"The conviction of Alger Hiss is a human tragedy. It is tragic that so great promise should have come to so inglorious an end. But the greater tragedy is that seemingly our national ideals no longer inspire the loyal devotion needed for their defense." (Some 25,000 American boys were shortly to challenge Mr. Dulles' lugubrious generalization by giving their lives on the battlefields of Korea.)

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Precisely four days later Dean Acheson—citing as his text the twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, verses 34 through 46, the theological basis on which the ministers of the Christian Church follow even a convicted murderer to the scaffold—said:

"I should like to make clear to you that whatever the outcome of any appeal which Mr. Hiss or his lawyers may make in this case, I do not intend to turn my back on Alger Hiss."

Some philosophic observers of the two men see in this disparity of reaction to the same incident an outbreak of the ancient conflict between Presbyterian and Episcopalian; the one prudently turning his back, the other defiantly wearing past mistakes. If there is self-righteousness in either position, or both, it is a matter for a panel of theologians to determine.

The triple reconciliation of righteousness, duty, and success is not always an easy one. Theologians would also be intrigued by the way Mr. Dulles resolved it when he had to deal with the controversial personnel cases which he inherited from his predecessor. The McCarthy group in Congress had declared total war against a number of foreign service career officers, in particular, John Carter Vincent and John Paton Davies.

Mr. Dulles dutifully went through the long records and found—as Mr. Acheson had—that there was no basis for dismissal on the ground of doubtful loyalty. But he divested himself prudently of Mr. Vincent on the ground that his China reporting had been "a failure," and of Mr. Davies for "disregard of proper forbearance and caution in making known his dissents outside privileged boundaries." His personal feelings about the Davies case may or may not be suggested by the fact that on the day after he had announced his decision he telephoned Mr. Davies and authorized him to use his (the Dulles) name as a reference if it would be helpful in obtaining another job. His final session with Mr. Vincent ended on the Dulles observation (apparently conclusive to Mr. Dulles) that Mr. Vincent's critics in the Senate talked louder than his supporters.

The rationale of Dulles' defenders in these matters is that when a man is trying to do something as important as preserving the peace of the world he cannot afford to carry excess baggage, any more than can a man trying to climb Mt. Everest. Mr. Dulles found ways and means of shedding the liabilities which had plagued Mr. Acheson unless, as in the case of Charles E. Bohlen, the defenders could muster stronger support than the critics. Dwight D. Eisenhower and Senator Robert Taft both spoke up for Mr. Bohlen. Dulles' detractors on the other hand use such words as "hypocrisy" and "moral cowardice" in speaking of these cases.

It is not clear whether the free run which Senator McCarthy enjoyed around the State Department in the early Dulles days represented Dulles' prudence or orders from the White House. It has been noted that when Harold Stassen did talk back to Senator McCarthy in those same days he was repudiated by the White House.

Dulles' adaptability to changed circumstances was tested, and confirmed, by his relations with his son Avery. Mr. Dulles himself has been loyal to his father's Presbyterianism in personal faith, in constant references in his public life to "moral" and "spiritual" values, and in considerable prominence as a layman in the work of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, an organization of Protestant churches. When Avery Dulles entered the Roman Catholic Church to study for the Jesuit priesthood Mr. Dulles broke off relations with his son. Relations were re-established before photographers when Dulles became a candidate for Senator.

There are plenty of other examples of Mr. Dulles' adaptability. When he visited South Korea just before the outbreak of war he

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promised the South Koreans that they would "not stand alone" in the event of attack. Back in Washington, he confided to reporters that he was vastly relieved when President Truman ordered U.S. troops into the Korean battle, for otherwise his promise of support to the South Koreans would have remained unfulfilled. From the outbreak of the war until the 1952 campaign he defended the Truman decision to enter the war. He then became critical of that decision during the campaign; but returned to its defense after the 1954 mid-term elections put a Democratic majority back in control of the Senate.

He contributed comfort and usable quotations to the Bricker amendment cause during the 1952 campaign, but turned against the amendment when it came toward a vote in 1953.

WHAT HE SAYS AND DOES

THE qualities which make Mr. Dulles controversial show up in his control of foreign policy. One usually knew with Acheson what his policy was trying to achieve. With Mr. Dulles one is not quite sure whether the American attitude toward Communist China, for example, is to be measured by the fact that he refused to shake hands with his Chinese opposite number, Chou En-lai, when they were in the same room in Geneva in 1954, or by the fact that since July of 1955 a U.S. Ambassador and a Communist Chinese ambassador have been accredited to each other in Geneva.

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Dulles' admirers cite his famous "brink of war" doctrine as evidence of his mastery of the technique of foreign relations. They take seriously his version of events, which is that he has deliberately taken the United States to the brink and thus saved the peace by his boldness.

His own version of how he got the Chinese Communists to agree to the truce in Korea is that when in India, on his first of many trips around the world, he told Prime Minister Nehru that if there were no truce the United States would open up the war and carry it across the Manchurian frontier. In the Dulles version of history Mr. Nehru presumably relayed this stern warning to Peking, after which the truce was concluded. But Mr. Nehru has since been reported as saying that if Mr. Dulles ever told him any such thing on that trip he, Mr. Nehru, didn't take it seriously enough even to remember it, let alone relay it to Peking.

The greatest single controversy over Dulles' conduct of foreign policy is whether Mr. Dulles has shaped events, or adjusted himself to them. Facts permit one to say only that at the end of Mr. Dulles' third year in office his policy was almost diametrically opposed to what he said it was going to be when he started out. His opening declaration was to take U.S. policy off the alleged dead center of Acheson's containment, inject boldness into it, and by boldness "liberate" the captured peoples of the Soviet realm and "roll back" the Iron Curtain.

Perhaps the most characteristically Dullesian operation was the one involving the famous Formosa Resolution. Congress was asked for what amounted to a blank check, authorizing the President to do almost anything to save Formosa. The country braced itself for war with China, and the world shuddered. But when the Seventh Fleet steamed westward under cover of the "Resolution" it did not fire its broadsides against the Communists on the China coast, but merely evacuated the Chinese Nationalists from the Tachen islands, then turned quickly away. The affair left people wondering whether the "Resolution" was intended to protect the Chinese Nationalists in the Far East or to cover the Dulles flank on Capitol Hill. And was the Seventh Fleet spared from attack by Chinese Communist planes because of the much publicized "Resolution," or because urgent unpublicized advices sent from the State Department to Peking by way of London, Moscow, and New Delhi had explained that the fleet maneuver was solely intended for the evacuation of the islands?

In pre- and early-Secretarial days Mr. Dulles spoke often and critically of the Acheson "containment" policy. The implication always was that he intended to go over from passive containment to an active "roll-back" of the Soviet frontiers of power. But the fascinating fact is that as the months elapsed and the Communist frontiers rolled over half of Indochina, Dulles' pronouncements on foreign policy more and more frequently included passages which sounded much like the theories of George F. Kennan, author of the containment doctrine.

The essence of Kennan doctrine was stated in the following passages from Mr. Kennan's Stafford Little Lectures of March 1954:

> I can conceive that Soviet power will some day recede from its present exposed positions, just as it has already receded in Finland and Yugoslavia and northern Iran. But I can conceive of this happening only precisely in the event that the vital prestige of Soviet power is not too drastically and abruptly engaged in the process, in the event that change is permitted to come gradually and inconspicuously

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as the result of compulsions resident within the structure of Soviet power itself, not created externally in the form of threats or ultimata or patent intrigues from the outside.

In 1952 during the election campaign and long thereafter, Mr. Dulles advocated policies toward the Soviet Union which bore some of the external earmarks of "threats," "ultimata," and "patent intrigue" although he would not himself of course put such labels upon them. "Instant" and "massive" retaliation sounded rather like a "threat." The warning to the Chinese Communists extended through Mr. Nehru partook of the quality of an "ultimatum." And the "liberation" policy sounded rather like a "patent intrigue," for Mr. Dulles never made it clear how he intended to bring about this desirable end; he just kept hinting at various ways and means of giving the Soviets "homework" and difficulties in "their own backyard." He seemed to imply an intensified "psychological warfare" and "propaganda" offensive abetted by undercover CIA work. He never spelled it out in detail beyond "the creation in the free world of political task forces to develop a freedom program for each of the captive nations."

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There does seem to have been a step-up in CIA undercover operations against the Communist bloc in the early days of Dulles' regime. The Committee for Free Europe was also for a time stimulated to greater activities. But by 1954, Washington had begun to demobilize the Chinese Nationalist division which had tried to operate in northern Burma against the Chinese Communist southern flank, and had begun to dismantle the CIA operation on Formosa known as Western Enterprises, Inc. Mr. Dulles had formally assured the United Nations, as early as September 15, 1953, that "our creed does not call for exporting revolution and inciting others to violence." Long after this the Committee for Free Europe continued to float its "freedom balloons" across the Iron Curtain, but everyone knew that the "forward strategy" of the early Eisenhower days had been laid aside. The Free Europe people, whose hopes had been focused on liberation by revolution, wondered plaintively just what was their continuing function.

So much attention was paid to the "massive retaliation" phrase in the famous speech of January 12, 1954, that few at the time noticed the balancing Kennanesque passage: "If we can deter such aggression as would mean general war, and that is our confident resolve, then we can let time and fundamentals work for us."

On March 17, 1954, in an expansion of this thesis, he was sure that "there is going on, even within the Soviet empire, a silent test of strength between the powerful rulers and the multitudes of human beings . . . their aspirations in the aggregate make up a mighty force." This was further documentation for the thesis that "time and fundamentals will work for us, if only we will let them."

On the day Mr. Kennan had his final farewell session with Mr. Dulles he spent a long evening of soul-searching with an old friend. At the end of the conversation, Mr. Kennan remarked that he supposed that Mr. Dulles could not after all pursue a Kennan policy as long as he, Kennan, remained in the State Department. Mr. Dulles continued to use bold words along with his Kennanesque passages, but certainly by February 8, 1955, the men of the Kremlin had taken the real measure of the bold words. On that date Vyacheslav Molotov said to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union:

> . . . the Republicans won the Presidential elections not because they proclaimed a more aggressive foreign policy, but, on the contrary, by virtue of the fact that they actually appeared to be for a certain time the political party which was furthering not the continuation of aggression in Korea but the ending of the war and the re-establishment of peace in that country.

Paul Nitze, Mr. Acheson's last chairman of the Policy Planning Staff, studied the Dulles record and published an article in *Foreign Affairs* (January 1954) analyzing the difference between "declaratory policy" and "operational policy." The Dulles "declaratory policy" has been all that the most ardent warhawks on Capitol Hill could desire, but his operating policies began with a private explanation after Chiang Kai-shek had been "unleashed" that real U.S. policy in the Far East was one of "disengagement" from the mainland of Asia.

The United States has not yet disengaged entirely from the coast of Asia, but its armed power, its "psychological warfare," and its propaganda have steadily receded from the frontiers of the power struggle. Under Mr. Dulles the actions, though not the voice, of the United States have beat less and less vigorously "on the vital prestige of Soviet power" and have given increasing opportunity for the "compulsions resident within the structure of Soviet power" to operate. Whether Mr. Dulles ever consciously practiced Kennan policy, while declaring a contrary policy, is a secret Mr. Dulles has never

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disclosed. But it is obvious that there has been a gradual flow of Dulles policy around the clock from denunciation of Kennan doctrine toward the actual practice of Kennan policy.

INSIDE HIS OFFICE

DID Mr. Dulles play it this way from the start, or simply adjust himself to events as they changed? The answer is obscured by many things, including Mr. Dulles' own methods of operation as a Secretary of State. An Assistant Secretary of State who attended his daily staff conference for many months is sure that if he entered the Dulles office at any other than the scheduled time, Mr. Dulles would not be able to recall his name.

In Mr. Acheson's day the upper levels of the State Department seethed with new ideas. Under Mr. Dulles, policy originates with Dulles texts. The fitness of one Ambassador for promotion was questioned on the ground that he had exhibited ignorance of a particular Dulles speech.

Two theories are equally permissible about Dulles' conduct of our foreign policy. One is that with a truly Machiavellian skill he has kept the Senate war-wing happy by his public pronouncements, while quietly paving the way for a settlement with the Communist world by his actual operations. The other theory is that the domestic Soviet aftermath of Stalin's death—coupled with a vast American urge for peace which seized upon Dwight Eisenhower as its instrument—have together produced a more relaxed world with which Mr. Dulles has, if sometimes tardily, come to terms.

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One theory among those who have worked with him is that Mr. Dulles is more preoccupied with the record of John Foster Dulles on the pages of history than with history itself. He seems to be singularly unaware of other people around him, and their possible corollary contributions to events. The "brink of war" article in *Life* attributes the peace exclusively to Dulles' technique—leaving one to wonder what Dag Hammarskjold, Nehru, Anthony Eden, Winston Churchill, Dwight Eisenhower, and several others were doing with their time.

At a ceremonial occasion convoked for the presentation of an award in international jurisprudence to Dr. Manley O. Hudson, Mr. Dulles made a long speech on international jurisprudence. He made no mention whatever of Dr. Hudson. One person present remarked that it seemed to him "an extraordinary example of gracelessness in an intelligent man." The thoughts of more than one member of the audience went back to Mr. Dulles' opening letter to the employees of the State Department when he took over command with the announced expectation of receiving their "personal loyalty."

Mr. Dulles is unquestionably intelligent. He is beyond doubt a highly skilled negotiator. He is a brilliant pleader of a case. There is no record of any client ever having been dissatisfied with the Dulles handling of his legal affairs. He is a candid and articulate expounder of a complex problem in foreign affairs. His knowledge of such problems and his ability to grasp their ramifications is probably unequaled by any other foreign minister of these times.

But, curiously enough, there seems to be a lurking lack of self-confidence, or perhaps nonfulfillment, somewhere in his make-up—as though in his own mind Grandfather John Foster still loomed unmatched over him. Mr. Dulles has made a far larger splash on the pages of history than the grandfather whom others have long since forgotten; but perhaps the grandson is still subconsciously a member of the clergyman's branch of the family, made uncomfortable by grandfather's condescension toward his poorer and more obscure relatives.

In the process either of making the peace, or of adjusting his record to the peacemaking work of others (take your choice), Mr. Dulles has chalked up one incontrovertible score over his predecessor. There have been grumblings on Capitol Hill from time to time, but never any real revolt against Mr. Dulles. The Senate voted its nonconfidence in Dean Acheson just before Mr. Acheson went to Brussels to negotiate the NATO alliance (which the Senate then ratified). No such public humiliation has ever been visited upon Mr. Dulles.

It can certainly be said of Mr. Dulles that he has successfully shielded himself and President Eisenhower's foreign policies from attack in the Senate. Whether he has actually generated American foreign policy is a further question which cannot be answered surely from the existing public record. Mr. Acheson and Mr. Kennan did generate policy. Mr. Dulles has steered old policies through a number of storms, and often steered wisely and well. At least, he kept the policies afloat.

Technically, Mr. Dulles has initiated only two new policies since he took office. One was the treaty of alliance with Chiang Kai-shek. The other was the "northern tier" policy in the Middle East which the British converted into the Bagdad pact. It is not necessarily a mark against

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him that neither of these policies has produced spectacularly successful results, nor that there are only two. It may be that he best served the needs of the times by steering old policies along old courses. Congress has unquestionably been more comfortable during Dulles' steering than it was during Acheson's generating—although it did vote, and heavily, in favor of every Acheson policy presented to it (albeit attacking Mr. Acheson personally). Mr. Dulles has yet to test his ability to carry a major new policy of his own through Congress.

But the conduct of foreign policy does not consist exclusively of negotiating formal treaties, implementing formal statements of policy, and generating concepts like the Marshall Plan and the NATO alliance. Policy can also be the absence of action. It may even involve the absence of action under the cover of much verbal sound and fury. Mr. Dulles inherited from Mr. Acheson a public opinion which demanded bold statements of defiance against the Communist world, but which also yearned for an end to the Korean war, and release from the fear of a greater atomic war.

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THE TWO-WAY CHARGE

THE Secretary has marvelously served these conflicting desires. He has appeared to be the crusading knight bearing the cross of righteousness on his shield, his sword upraised against the foe and his voice calling for the charge. But if your glance descends from this stirring picture, you notice that the charger he bestrides is ambling placidly in the opposite direction.

The spring crisis in Arab-Israeli affairs shows the characteristic earmark of a Dulles operation. At suitable intervals Mr. Dulles loudly called upon the Soviets to prove their good intentions by deeds, not words. But when Soviet arms flowed into Egypt Mr. Dulles inconspicuously noted that Moscow had a legal right to do what it did. Britain, in anguish over the apparent threat to its Middle East oil supplies, reversed its ancient pro-Arab inclination, sided with Israel, and tried to involve the United States under the 1952 tripartite declaration. Mr. Dulles deftly side-stepped this London move by invoking the UN, thus leaving the door open for Soviet participation in a settlement.

There was no formalized declaration or implemention of policy in this operation. There were no documents. There was a risk that the Soviets would seek dangerous advantage from the leaning of Mr. Dulles away from London. But it was not the kind of risk Mr. Dulles takes in the picture of his behavior beloved alike by his adulators and his detractors. History is likely to record that Mr. Dulles has taken more and bolder risks on the brink of appeasement than on the brink of war.

It is perhaps premature to suggest that whereas the times of Stalin called for a Secretary of State who literally did stand up to the Russians, the times of Khrushchev call for one who will make peace with them behind a smoke screen of threatening words. We know that the men of Moscow were shaken out of some of their illusions by the resistance of the West in Korea. We do not know yet whether they understand and will respond to Mr. Dulles' extraordinary way of riding foreign policy backwards. And it is much too early to decide whether the Dulles way of riding is intentional, or accidental.

In the meantime, in spite of all criticism, Mr. Dulles continues to ride American foreign policy as though it belonged to him by inherited right.

He took office with the following statement to his assembled employees in the courtyard of the State Department:

> I don't suppose that there is any family in the United States which has for so long been identified with the Foreign Service and the State Department as my family. I go back a long ways—I'd have to stop and think of the date—when a great-great uncle of mine, Mr. Welsh, was one of our early Ministers to the Court of St. James. In those days, you know, they were Ministers, not Ambassadors.
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> My grandfather, John W. Foster, was for a long time in the diplomatic service and then ended up as Secretary of State under President Harrison. His son-in-law, my uncle, Robert Lansing, was Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson.
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> Coming down to my own generation, my brother, Allen W. Dulles, was for many years in the Foreign Service of the United States. My sister, Eleanor Lansing Dulles, is today in the State Department and has been for several years. I, myself, have had at least sporadic association with the Department of State and with the Foreign Service throughout most of my life. So you can see, from the standpoint of background and tradition, it is to me an exciting and thrilling thing to be with you here today, as Secretary of State.

To Mr. Dulles the State Department has become a family fief. He inherited it by feudal right, he and his family, of which he is the senior living member.

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