



MODERN SETTING FOR CARACAS MEETING—Ultra-modern design features the auditorium in which western hemisphere delegates met March 1 in Caracas, Venezuela, for the 10th Inter-American Conference. Hanging panels provide an ingenious acoustical system carrying sound to all parts of the auditorium in equal volume. Each seat has a dial phone on which delegates can tune in on the language translation desired.

10th Inter-American Conference Begins

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Latin Americans here for the opening of the 10th Inter-American Conference Monday got word from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles that the United States' program of friendship with them has been the big northern neighbor's "most solid and dependable policy."

"The friendly association of American states is the oldest foreign policy of the United States and it is still our most solid and dependable policy," he said in a brief airport statement on his arrival for the 20-nation conference.

SECURITY MEASURES

The first day's program of the meeting was confined to formalities—a preliminary organization session in the morning and an afternoon plenary session with Venezuelan President Marcos Perez Jimenez extending the welcome.

The conference is expected to last three to five weeks. Venezuela took extraordinary security measures to prevent a recurrence of the rioting in which some 1,500 persons were killed during the last Inter-American Conference, in Bogota, Colombia, in April, 1948. Communists were blamed for that outbreak.

BARBED WIRE FENCES

High, well-guarded barbed wire fences surrounded nearby University City, where the conference activities center. Guards patrolled the airport at Dulles' arrival with his party of 15 experts on Latin America. Perez Jimenez sent his own automobile, which has bullet-resistant windows, for Dulles, but S. Ambassador Fletcher Warren said the special protection had not been requested.

Dulles' statement emphasizing Washington's friendship with the southern neighbors came at a time when many Latin Americans were wondering out loud what policy President Eisenhower's administration would follow in this hemisphere.

Communist infiltration in the Americas is one of the major topics for the conference, but Latin Americans consider economic matters the chief item.

GUATEMALAN ISSUE

Dulles' brief statement made no mention of U.S. economic plans for Latin America. And he emphasized that U. S. friendship for Latin America is "based upon reciprocity and mutual benefit."

Any U. S. attempt to spotlight Guatemala for Communist influence on her leftist government appeared doomed to failure. The U. S. delegation had hoped to make this a clear-cut issue, but several foreign ministers made it plain they would hold out for discussion of communism only as a hemispheric problem, rather than in specific countries.

5 Persons Die In Violent Blast

Explosion Rocks South Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Five persons, including three children in a neighborhood luncheonette, were killed Sunday night when a violent explosion destroyed two buildings in a crowded section of South Philadelphia.

A 17-year-old girl, Ruby Mosley, trapped for six hours in a public telephone booth under the mountain of rubble, escaped unharmed. Twenty others, including four firemen, were injured.

DENSELY POPULATED

The blast, of undetermined origin, occurred on a quiet Sunday night in one of the most densely populated areas of the city. Deputy Fire Chief George E. Hink said it was "amazing" that the death toll was not higher.

The roofs of two adjoining three-story brick buildings were lifted into the air, turned half-way around and dropped on the rear of the structures. Not a wall was standing when firemen arrived and flames licked at the pile of debris. Some 500 persons were routed from their homes and Red Cross authorities estimated 50 families were sheltered for the night.

The buildings housed the luncheonette and an adjoining jewelry store. The upper stories contained apartments.

PROPRIETOR KILLED

The victims included the proprietor of the luncheonette, Isadore Pearlman, 50, and three young customers. The bodies of Bruce Schwartz, 9, and Salvatore Baladino, 6, were found under the soda fountain. The body of 15-year-old Marie Marone was uncovered nearby.

The fifth victim was Mrs. Fanny Rudolph, 45, who lived in an apartment above the jewelry store.

The impact of the explosion bent an electric sign across the street into an U-shape. Windows for blocks were shattered.

Several neighbors told police they noticed the odor of gas before the blast.

MOONSHINERS GET THE FACTS

LEITCHFIELD, Ky. (AP)—The Rural Electrification Administration doesn't want to take chances with any moonshiners' rifles when it sends an airplane hedge-hopping over Grayson hills.

The REA plane will be searching for power-line breaks, not stills, the REA explained through the Grayson County News.

Charles Dunham, editor of the weekly paper, said Saturday he published the explanation, addressed to any makers of illegal whisky, at the REA's request.

French Tanks Lead Attack

HANOI, Indochina (AP)—The French claimed new successes Monday in flushing Vietminh rebels out of the key Red River lowlands of north Indochina, with 92 rebels killed and 114 captured.

A French army communiqué said tanks and other mobile units scattered one Red - commanded Vietminh battalion in a sharp daytime fight in the Phu Van Dinh sector, 30 miles south of Hanoi. The French Union forces had "light losses," the announcement said, while 92 Vietminh were killed and 98 captured.

French Union patrols in the mountains of north Indochina continued to feel out the positions of 36,000 rebels entrenched around the major French fortification of Dien Bien Phu. No major contact was reported.

President, Wife Attend Services

WASHINGTON (AP)—President and Mrs. Eisenhower were among worshippers at National Presbyterian Church Sunday to hear The Rev. Harold E. Meyers, associate minister, plead for "greater inner discipline" in relations with God and man.

Admonishing that the pursuit of happiness itself calls for inner discipline, he urged more consideration of all peoples of the earth.

Farm Price Drop Halted—Benson

WASHINGTON (AP)—Secretary of Agriculture Benson, in his first annual report to the President, said Monday 1953 was a year in which a long decline in farm prices had been halted and a "sound permanent" farm program had been developed.

It also was a year, the secretary said, in which steps were taken to adjust agriculture's production—expanded greatly during and after the war—to peacetime needs.

SURPLUS PROBLEM

Benson said the Eisenhower administration had inherited problems of surpluses, over-production and declining farm prices from the Truman administration. Much of the new administration's first year in office, he said, was to deal with these problems so that it could move "constructively" toward putting agriculture on a sound basis.

"The problem was made more difficult because the tools available were not fully adequate to the needs of the 1950s," Benson said.

"The present farm programs were basically developed during the 1930s as a part of the battle against the depression of those years."

'EXPAND MARKETS'

"They were amended during the 1940s as a part of this nation's economic answer to the total war of those years," he continued. "But the age we now live in is different. The demand situation is different than it was in either the great depression or the great war."

war. The production situation is also different."

The administration in January laid a proposed new farm program before Congress. It would lay much less stress on flexible price supports as a measure for stabilizing farm income and on efforts to expand farm markets.

"Agriculture must strive," the secretary's report said, "to expand markets for farm products both at home and abroad. Drastic action may be necessary to remove the accumulated surpluses of the past several years."



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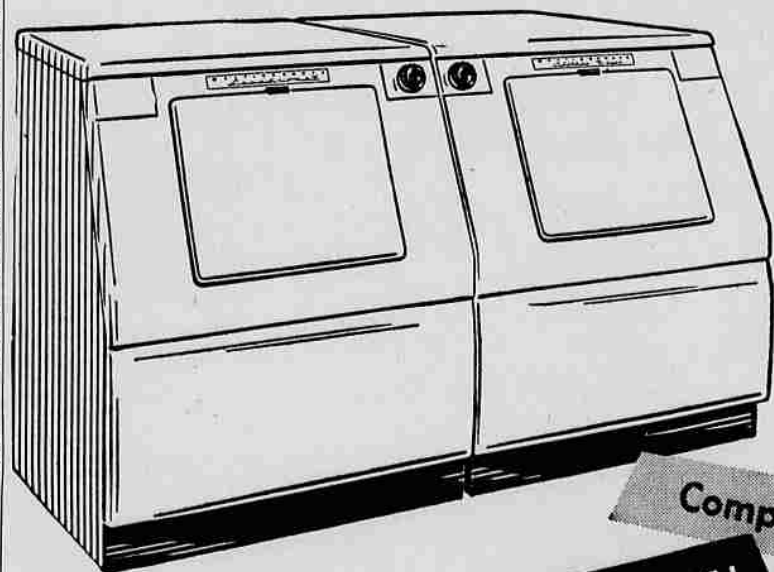
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