

Washington Digest

Sincerity Marks Peace Parley at San Francisco

Creation of Flexible Organization Foreseen;
Position of President Truman Bolsters
Hand of U. S. Delegation.

By BAUKHAGE

News Analyst and Commentator.

WNU Service, Union Trust Building,
Washington, D. C.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—There is something significant, I believe, in the fact that this world conference which hopes to plot a happier course for the future of the world is being held at the Golden Gate. I can't help contrasting the atmosphere with that which enveloped the gathering on the banks of the Seine 26 years ago, which I also covered.

I think there is much more hope for success for this gathering than there was for the Paris conference two decades ago, although most of us who crowded into its opening session on the Quai d'Orsay in Paris on a sunny January day in 1919, were well supplied with hope, too.

I think the meeting place was well chosen and if the agenda becomes unfinished business, it might well be concluded on the same spot where the clean fog sweeps in from the Pacific whose wide waters unite the east and the west.

There still lingers on California's shores the memory of its multifold historical national contacts. It was here in "Drake's Bay" that the famous English explorer is said to have stopped to repair his ship. I say was Drake's bay for later, Cermeno, the Spaniard, on a voyage from Manila in 1595, was shipwrecked in the same body of water and gave it its present name of San Francisco bay. The Franciscan missionaries built missions a mile-day's journey apart from southern to northern California. The sword followed the cross and Portola's Spanish soldiery fought their way up to what is still called the Presidio, the very year the American nation was born.

Less definite are the records of the czar's explorers but the "Russian river" just north of here remains a flowing memento of their early visits.

Less distinguished Chinese and Japanese came and raised their problems; great settlements of Hindus remain in the state and colonies of Swiss and Italians toil among vineyards reproducing the products of their homelands.

Seek to Build On Firm Ground

As I write these lines two things appear as near certainties as certainties exist in this kaleidoscopic world. The United Nations are sincere in the hope of erecting some sort of structure which, if it is humanly possible to do so, can provide a place for the shelter, care and feeding of the dove of peace. A shadowy and almost paradoxical corollary of this statement is the frank acknowledgment that probably one desideratum primum omnium of only one of the great powers is the international organization itself. What Russia and Britain want, first of all, is an inner citadel girded by strong mutually protective alliances. The rest of the structure is, for them, largely window dressing. Nevertheless, to obtain cooperation among the strong few, they are willing to include the weaker many.

The second thing which I think even at this juncture can be predicted is that no matter how harmonious the building of this new temple of hope may be, the final edifice will be constructed on such a broad foundation and with such wide portals, that it will not confine its tenants to any very strict restraint of action. There will be plenty of room to turn around in it, in case some of the occupants feel they don't want to go in exactly the same direction as their fellows. This is not a cynical conclusion—it is simply the result of a practical desire not to put anything in the way of getting something started. The American delegation realizes that.

An agreement on major questions which could be decided following the meeting of Stettinius, Molotov and Eden was announced by the delegation before we left Washington, which meant that Senator Vandenberg was satisfied that the wording of the final agreement which the Americans would accept contained enough elasticity to provide an "escape clause." This assures the senate and the American people that



Truman Understands Congress' Viewpoint

With Harry Truman in the White House the position of the delegation has been strengthened by his announcement that he would not attend the meeting in person, but would back up his delegates from his desk "where he belonged." There are several other things that augur well for harmony. The senate knows that Mr. Truman is not personally committed in any way to Britain or Russia since he did not participate in any of the talks of the Big Three; they noted his remark that Foreign Commissar Molotov when he arrived in this country would pay his respects to the President of the United States "as he should." This time the mountain had come to Mahomet, not the reverse.

Lastly, there is the very potent fact that President Truman was Senator Truman for a long while. He knows the legislative viewpoint and, to know the legislative viewpoint, not academically as an outside observer, but as a long-time possessor of that viewpoint, is of great practical importance. Remember the frequent controversies between the administration and congress in the past few years. Note, likewise, two of the outstanding successes in obtaining cooperation between the executive and the legislative branches: Cordell Hull and James Byrnes, both former members of congress.

So much for the hope for domestic harmony. Now consider the difference between the position of the United States in 1919 and the United States in 1945.

Then, it is true, our entry into the war made victory possible. But now we have taken over the major burden of the fighting and in so doing have become the most powerful country in the world and of all the powerful countries, the one which emerges with its military resources least impaired—by far the most powerful in terms of army, navy and war material and wealth.

On the whole I think it is fair to report a general feeling of optimism on the part of the American delegation and at least a feeling on the part of other delegates I have met, of willingness to try to justify that optimism.

A G.I. President

It is a long time since we have had an ex-soldier in the White House. President Truman is the first veteran of World War I to accept the mansion.

As you know he broadcast to the troops overseas soon after he addressed congress. Naturally the movie-cameras and the sound-track boys were there. So were the army photographers. But the Big Boys get the priorities at such shows. The newsreels, the top-flight magazines and the rest. The boys in uniform were pushed back. They didn't belong.

As a result they got a sad side shot that was strictly ng.

So the officer in charge went up and asked if he could have a re-take. "Certainly," (or words to that effect since we don't quote presidents) said President Truman. "Go ahead, we'll do the whole thing over."

Well, army pictorial does things right. It has some of the best Hollywood technical men in uniform. It took a long time to get just the right lighting. So an official came up and said:

"You have just ten minutes more."

Up spoke the captain: "Do you want the President taken right or wrong?"

The President broke in: "Take all night if you want to." (or, as I said, words to that effect). This picture was for the G.I.s.

And so they fiddled and fooled until they had the lights right, until they had everything just right.

And then the President went ahead and did his speech over again.

It is one of the best action shots taken in the White House.

But you won't see it. It was just for the G.I.s.

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Allies Mount Drives to Smash Nazi Pockets for Early Win; Guerrillas Pare Jap Strength

Released by Western Newspaper Union.
(EDITOR'S NOTE: When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of Western Newspaper Union's news analysis and not necessarily of this newspaper.)



Forced to view emaciated bodies of atrocity victims near Weimar, German civilians register conflicting emotions. Stories of brutalities have led congressmen to call for harsh peace.

EUROPE: Trap Closes

With Adolf Hitler himself directing the city's defenses, Berlin stood as a burning symbol as combined U. S., British, Russian and French armies sought a speedy knockout of German remnants to bring the war to an early conclusion.

Of all the savage city fighting of World War II—fighting which left such historic centers as Warsaw and Vienna in ruin—none approached the ferocity of the battle for Berlin, where German women and even children reportedly joined the 500,000 army defenders in a fanatical attempt to curb the Russian steamroller.

With both Germans and Russians fighting with a burning hatred for each other, the battle swirled from house to house through rubble strewn streets, with Red artillery and air fleet daily reducing enemy strongholds. Said Russian correspondent: "Each stone of the city, each meter of street, is against us. We have to take them with our blood."

As the Reds' vise closed on embattled Berlin and Hitler exposed himself to one of the most dramatic captures in history, elements of the two Russian armies attacking the city swept beyond it westward for a junction with American troops along the Elbe and Mulde rivers. Meanwhile, still another Red force smashed past Stettin to drive westward along the Baltic coast and join British troops whittling Nazi pockets in the north.

Working together to finish off the Germans in the north, the allies also cooperated to K. O. them in the south, with two drives aiming to smash the Nazis' vaunted national redoubt in the Bavarian Alps and pinch off the great arsenal of Czechoslovakia.

In the first instance, the French 1st army, the U. S. 7th and 9th and the Russians rode hard on the enemy's mountain hideout from the west, north and east in an attempt to enter it before fanatical SS men could steady themselves for a stand. In the other instance, the U. S. 3rd army pushed into Czechoslovakia from the west while Russians moved in from the east, with the Yanks also swinging southward into Austria for a hookup with the Reds. Thus was a solid ring of steel forged around Hitler's last important industrial area.

In Italy, fast U. S. and British motorized columns and low-flying planes shot up retreating Nazi troop columns falling back on the Alps to the north. Italian partisans fast took over administration of this last stronghold of Mussolini's.

POSTWAR SECURITY: Discuss Terms

As delegates from 46 United Nations fashioned a postwar organization to keep the peace at the San Francisco conference, they pondered amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks plan, serving as a basis for such a body.

Foremost among the amendments were those proposed by China and supported by the U. S., Britain and Russia calling for the application of justice and international law in settlement of disputes; the referral of changes or development of such law to the assembly of the security organization, and the addition of educational and cultural cooperation to the postwar body's responsibilities.

With the U. S., Britain, Russia, China and France dominating the organization through permanent

membership on the executive council, and with any of the five big nations able to check the use of force or economic sanctions for aggression, many of the smaller countries strove for greater representation of the smaller states in policy making.

PACIFIC: Guerrillas Help

Effective in harassing enemy strength in Europe, guerrillas are playing an equally effective role in the Philippines, where their operations behind Japanese lines are helping to reduce their position.

While regular American army units tightened their hold on the Baguio district in northern Luzon, where the Japanese were putting up a last stand, Philippine guerrillas sallied far behind the front lines to capture the big port of Vigan and adjacent airfield and clean up the entire province of Ilocos Sur.

Meanwhile, Japanese defenses on bloody Okinawa crumbled under the terrific weight of U. S. naval, low-flying aerial and artillery bombardment, with the Yanks fighting forward through battered entrenchments. Japanese dead far outnumbered prisoners, again indicating the ferocity with which they resisted.

FRANCE: Bombshell

With Marshal Henri Petain still commanding a large following, France seethed as the 89-year-old hero of Verdun of World War I and collaborator of World War II voluntarily returned to his native country to stand trial on charges of plotting against the state.

Famed for stopping the Germans at Verdun in 1916 when they threatened to break the back of French resistance, Petain gained notoriety after his country's downfall in 1940 for a cooperative policy with the enemy which his followers aver was necessary for him to obtain fair treatment for the stricken nation.

Declaring that at his age one had only to fear a failure to perform his duty, Petain said he was returning for trial not only to clear his own honor, but also to protect all of his followers. The peculiarity of the Marshal's position is exemplified by the fact that some of his reforms have been carried over by the De Gaulle government.

MEAT: Supply Cut

Ring true to predictions that the meat situation would grow even tighter, OPA revealed a 2½ per cent cut in supplies this month from April, with slightly more veal, lamb, mutton and pork offset by about 9,000,000 pounds less beef.

At the same time, OPA announced that rationing would be extended to cover 99½ per cent of all available meat items, with only about 5,000,000 pounds of mutton left on a point-free basis. Cull and utility grades of veal and lamb and the breasts, shanks, necks and flanks of those meats were put on the red-point list.

So that the amount of red points would jibe with the available supplies of meat, point values were upped, with increases of from one to two points a pound for most cuts of all grades of lamb and veal and one point a pound on most beef steaks. Utility grades of veal and lamb will possess the same ration values as the better types.

Keep Troops Moving

Approximately 38,500,000 troops were carried by rail in organized movements from Pearl Harbor to the end of February, 1945, the Association of American Railroads discloses.

This number, it is said, does not include the millions of others traveling under orders in smaller groups or the millions of servicemen and women commuting on furloughs.

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ASK ME ANOTHER?

A General Quiz

The Questions

1. Where is the longest canal in the world?
2. Are congressmen required by law to attend any session of congress?
3. Who calls "track" in the sports world when he wants people out of his way?
4. What man signed his correspondence and paintings with the figure of a butterfly?
5. Will food cook more quickly in vigorously or gently boiling water?
6. Sinology is the study of what?
7. What is a milksop?
8. What stadium has the largest seating capacity in the United States?
9. What bird has the swiftest flight for short distances?
10. Approximately how far does the earth travel each day on its journey around the sun?

The Answers

1. In China. It is 2,100 miles long and was completed in 1350 after 600 years.
2. No.
3. A skier.
4. James Whistler.
5. The same.
6. Chinese language and culture.
7. A weak man.
8. Soldier field, Chicago (150,000).
9. Humming bird.
10. 1,601,604 miles.

Wear Bronze Arrowhead

American soldiers who have landed on enemy-held territory by parachute, glider or landing craft one or more times, are now entitled to wear a bronze arrowhead on the service ribbon for that theater of war.

Acid Indigestion

Relieved in 5 minutes or double money back
When excess stomach acid causes painful, suffocating gas, sour stomach and heartburn, doctors usually prescribe the fastest-acting medicine known for symptomatic relief—medicine like those in Bellane Tablets. No laxative. Bellane brings comfort in a lift or double your money back on return of bottle to us. See at all druggists.

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BARBS . . . by Baukhage

The miners came in '48 to California, the diplomats in '45 are digging in to stay.

Max Schmeling, former heavyweight champion, who was put in a concentration camp and "treated" for defeatism by the Nazis, is now a welterweight, according to a Swedish paper.

America is bankrupt, says a Jap foreign office spokesman—yenful thinking.

One of the shortages which has not been called to general attention is the lack of garbage cans. The OPA says that only one-fifth of the number demanded is being produced. This will soon be evident to anyone who doesn't hold his nose.