

State Department Continues Caution on Release of News

By A. ROBERT SMITH
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Washington (Special)—The State Department was upset about a recent story in a Canadian newspaper concerning new negotiations over the Columbia River Treaty. "We checked around and couldn't find anyone who had talked to a Canadian newspaperman," said a government official. "So we concluded that the Canadians must have leaked it."

The significance of this incident is that it reveals the standard caution of the State Department about what it regards as premature news stories. This attitude pre-dates by many years the recent Cuban crisis and the recently invoked—but later—relaxed policy of requiring State Department officials to report any talks they've had with newsmen.

As for the languishing treaty which Canada has never ratified, some exploratory talks have been held between Canadian and American technicians, and more are scheduled. Nothing definitive has been concluded, informed sources say. But the State Department's prevailing attitude is that news stories about what is going on or not going on might rupture prospects for accord. While ticklish differences with a foreign government are being discussed, State tends to share the British practice of telling the public what the government thinks is expedient to tell. American officials publicly salute the concept of "the people's right to know," but privately they usually reserve the right to decide when.

Central Point
Administrations of both parties have followed this practice. Yet this is the central point of the Kennedy Administration's handling of newsworthy information during the Cuban crisis: it reserved the right to set the timing for release of information that was news to the Soviets and the American people.

Robert Manning, State's public affairs chief, says there is nothing sacrosanct about immediacy—the reporting of developments immediately after or as they occur. He argues that journalism's challenge is no longer to beat the opposition paper with a hot scoop but to make complex development intelligible to the reader.

As an ex-Time editor, Manning expresses the view of the weekly news magazine which shuns daily newspaper adherence to bold headlines or bulletins of late but piecemeal developments. Whether it is sound to apply news magazine practices to public affairs is debatable—and Manning welcomes debate on this point.

Articles Mixed
Newspaper, of course, are changing. Forced to report more about more complex affairs, from African politics to lunar rocketry, newspapers have mixed more interpretive articles with straight news dispatches to help readers understand the significance of rapid developments. But they want to perform this function in the tradition of the daily press—interpreting developments as soon as possible after they occur, not waiting until the end of the week or until a government official decides it is propitious to make public certain information long withheld.

Responsible, experienced reporters seldom are absolutely blocked for long from learning through trusted sources

what is going on inside, no matter what practices the top officials have imposed or how much protesting there is about secrecy in government.

It is generally recognized that the most deplorable secrecy is the cover-up of costly mistakes or deliberate wrongdoing which would be embarrassing to the party in power or cost some officials their jobs or send them to jail. Often it takes a congressional investigation to pry off the lid—and even this sometimes fails, especially when the administration resorts to the claim of "executive privilege" to shield its

act and officials from scrutiny by Congress.

Developments involving international military affairs, however, must be weighed differently from purely domestic civilian affairs. Arthur Sylvester, long-time Washington newspaper correspondent, takes an even tougher line than Manning about the virtue he sees in withholding information until the government finds it expedient to release it.

No one is too critical about the Kennedy Administration clamping down on information about new military equipment and about intelligence

operations, which includes spying and reconnaissance. But Sylvester has been severely criticized for saying that he regards news as a "weapon." This is not a very new idea at the Pentagon, for the Army, Navy and Air Force for some years have been making news a political weapon by leaking stories calculated to serve their respective interests in interservice rivalry. Other agencies have done likewise in the constant jurisdiction warfare that is part of bureaucracy.

Sylvester says "he was thinking of news as a weapon of government strategy be-

cause the very act of disclosing certain inside developments involving military decisions in Washington produce counter-developments inside the Kremlin or elsewhere. The government, he maintains, should be privileged to control the timing of such disclosures for the maximum strategic advantage. In this sense, news becomes a weapon of policy in the war of nerves with the Communist hierarchy.

Tension To Continue
The test of this concept, over the long haul, will be whether the weapon of news is ever aimed at the home

front, either to bombard the public with government propaganda or to withhold from the voters the information they require to judge the administration's handling of its responsibilities.

The tension between the outsiders (press and public) who want the news right now, and the insiders who want to let it out when they think it will "do the most good," has been going on for decades. It is apt to continue as long as this is a free society in which part of the press is aggressively enterprising and part of the government is noticeably defensive and secretive.

Gift Wrapping Can Be Enjoyable

If you don't wait until the last minute, and have all the tissue, ribbons, paper, bows, tags and other "ingredients" you need—gift wrapping Christmas packages can be as much fun as opening them.

Be sure you have a good working surface, the dining room table, a desk top or a card table can give you a good area for your happy task.

Always cut your paper a bit larger than the box you are going to wrap. This extra allowance will provide smooth edges and a neater fit to the paper. Make the side folds first, then bring the paper down upon top and up from the bottom. This is the way professionals do it.

Tie your ribbons around the package at square corners, or diagonally. You can achieve a smart look by taping the ribbons on at various angles. Most rolls of ribbons provide instructions on tying the various bows. If you are at all dextrous, these instructions are easy to follow.



KNIT ENSEMBLE—All that glitters this holiday is a "Ban-Lon" knit ensemble in sparkling silver, its pearl-buttoned cardigan and softly-pleated skirt rate center stage with easy-care and easy-to-wear qualities. Ensemble by Rosanna.

Colorful Towels Dress Up Both Kitchen, Bath

One of the most delightful presents you can give to a homemaker is something new and gay for her home. Costly to you? Not at all. New coordinated towel ensembles, for either the kitchen or the bathroom, are moderate in price and will pay handsome decor dividends, say the stylist at Morgan-Jones.

Christmas collections are literally a-bloom with fanciful brightly colored designs, and the nicest part of all, for the hurried shopper, is they are already handsomely prepackaged. Once thought of merely as function items, towels and their counterparts can now be had in a range of clear, fresh colors that can revitalize a room quickly and easily.

For the kitchen, there are unlimited choices of ensemble towel pretties—roosters, oversized apples, floral bouquets, stylized fruits, etc. Even the toaster, which sits on the counter or open shelf can get a terry "dress up" and be ready at all times for quick service.

Though bathroom towels are necessities, they can qualify as decorative accessories, too. Select from pert designs such as stately roses, or rambling types; practical eyelet-lace designs; or medleys of wild flowers in gay colors. The towels are as practical as they are pretty. Loomed with tightly anchored loops and borders that do not pucker, they're fashioned of fine cotton yarns, wonder-woven to give soft touch and super-eager absorbency.

And pretty towels are sure to repeat their Merry Christmas message over and over, all year round, say the folks at Morgan-Jones.

COED BEAUTY
Nashville, Tenn. — **UPI** — Maria Beale Fletcher of Asheville, N.C., Miss America of 1962, is now a coed here at Vanderbilt university.

RECORDS
Stillwater, Minn. — **UPI** — When Babe Orff, gold pro at the Stillwater Country club, turned to bowling this fall he came up with triplicate scores of 213, 213 and 213. He said the country club set a local golf record this year, too—seven holes in one by six members and a visitor.

Dennis the Menace



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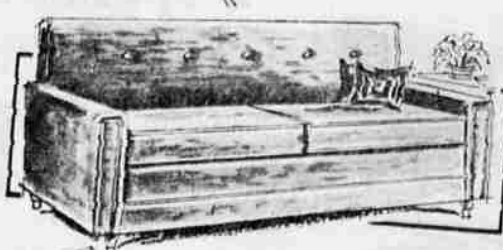
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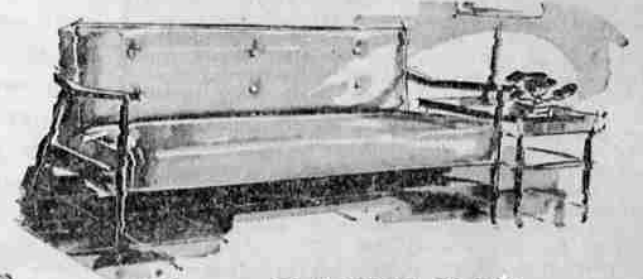
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