

Story of Truman, Byrnes Row Over Relations With Russia Told In New Book

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER
 WASHINGTON (AP) — President Truman and his former secretary of state, James F. Byrnes, were in open contradiction Tuesday over Russian relations in January, 1946.

Truman says he did, Byrnes, now governor of South Carolina, says "absolutely untrue."

The dispute flared between the two ex-friends as a result of the publication of the book "Mr. President" by the editor, William Hillman, prints the text of a Truman letter addressed to Byrnes on Jan. 5, 1946, with a presidential note saying Truman read it to Byrnes personally.

Hillman, former newspaperman and now a commentator for the Mutual Broadcasting System, says in the book that the President gave him express permission to make the document public at the time.

It is possibly the most sensational single item in the book, which

is constructed largely of excerpts from Truman's diaries and private papers.

The book discloses that on two occasions during the last four years Truman feared World War III was about to begin.

The first was during the Berlin Blockade crisis in 1948. The second was in December, 1950, after the Chinese Communists intervened in the Korean War and pushed the United Nations forces back.

The papers also disclose that Truman once sent a message to the Kremlin that Stalin was not a man of his word.

The letter to Byrnes, which the President said was so urgent that he read it to Byrnes instead of mailing it, was released at this time, Hillman says, to make two points:

(1) To show Truman's early attitude toward the Soviets; and (2) to show the President's attitude toward delegating authority to subordinates.

On the first point, the President said in the letter "I'm tired of babbling the Russians" and implied criticism of agreements which Byrnes had entered into during a trip to Moscow in December, 1945, concerning Romania and Bulgaria, as well as Byrnes' handling of Russian relations in other respects.

The president said Russia must be confronted with an "iron fist" to prevent an attack on Turkey and seizure of the Dardanelles.

On the second point, the President expressed sharp criticism of his secretary of state for allegedly failing to keep him informed of developments at the Moscow meetings and for making final decisions there without consultation.

The president said he would make the final decisions.

Truman's notation at the top of this document which Hillman described in the book as being signed "HBT" said: "I wrote this memo and read it to my secretary of state. So urgent were its contents I neither had it typed nor mailed. But preferred to read it in order to give emphasis to the points wanted to make."

Byrnes denied that the letter had been read to him. In a statement from his office at Spartanburg, S. C., Byrnes said:

"Before the announcement of this book, I had not heard of the letter alleged to have been addressed to me by Mr. Truman, which letter he says he did not read to me until a year later that Mr. Truman's statement that he read the letter to me is absolutely untrue. Had he done so he would have had to write another letter accepting my resignation."

It was not until a year later that Byrnes resigned, Byrnes' statement added, without explanation, that once before "Mr. Truman caused one of his biographers to misrepresent me. I ignored it."

"This time I will not," he declared. "As soon as I have an opportunity I intend to write an article to show that his statement that he read the letter to me is untrue."

In his own book of five years ago, "Speaking Frankly," Byrnes said the Moscow meeting of U.S., British and Soviet foreign ministers broke a deadlock on drafting the Italian and other World War II peace treaties, provided for a Soviet voice in Japanese affairs on America's terms, made progress toward broadening the Red con-

rolled government of Romania and Bulgaria, produced new agreements on China, won Russian assent to creation of a United Nations commission to study atomic energy control and left unresolved only the question of what to do about the Red revolution in Northern Iran.

Truman, however, saw the results of the Moscow meeting in an entirely different light. After penning his views, he wrote this introductory note to the draft:

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Truman said, too, the United States should protest violently against Russia's conduct in Iran. He predicted Russia would invade Turkey and seize the Dardanelles unless confronted with force.

He said that what the United States should do thenceforth was to make its own demands on Russia, including internationalization of Communist-held waterways like the Danube and a settlement of Russia's lend-lease debt to this country.

And Truman said the United States should "maintain complete control of Japan and the Pacific."

Truman's account gives no hint as to Byrnes' response. But the impression is inescapable that the affair marked the beginning of a period of intensifying friction between the President and his secretary of state at that time.

Byrnes resigned a year later.

The absence of any word on what other differences developed between Truman and Byrnes during the year that followed makes the book notable for its omissions as well as its disclosures.

For example, clearcut information is lacking on any fresh insight into Truman's dismissal of Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace after Wallace's foreign policy row with Byrnes in September, 1946; on the resignation 18 months ago of Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson after his long feud with Secretary of State Acheson; on the

bitter fight against Acheson in Congress and in some administration quarters; and on the abortive 1948 pre-election project for sending Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson on "peace mission" to Moscow, which Gen. George C. Marshall, then secretary of state, killed off.

Here are the chief points the book does make about Truman and foreign policy matters:

1. When Russia's blockade of Berlin was six months old, the President was briefed by his military chiefs on Sept. 13, 1948, on "bases, bombs, Moscow, Leningrad and the like".

Truman wrote afterwards: "I have a terrible feeling that we are very close to war." He had recorded earlier that he had made the decision to stay in Berlin at any cost although the late Secretary of Defense Forrestal wanted to hedge — apparently meaning to leave some "way out" if the Russian pressure got too heavy.

2. On Dec. 9, 1950, a month after massive Chinese armies struck in Korea, Truman wrote that the nation faced a jittery world and confided:

"I have worked for peace for five years, and six months, and it looks like World War III is near."

4. In the Byrnes memorandum of January, 1946, Truman called for an end to compromise with Russia and said: "Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand — 'How many divisions have you?'"

5. A message to Stalin in March, 1946, sent through Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith at Moscow said Truman was disappointed that Stalin had not kept his word to get Russian troops out of Iran by March 2. He also told Smith to "urge Stalin" to visit America.

6. In 1947 Truman wrote Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt that he had been trying to carry out her late husband's policy and that he had been surprised at Roosevelt's patience in correspondence with Stalin.

7. Also in 1947 the President noted: "I can't agree that because Russia violates treaties we should follow her example and do the same thing."

Like many others, Truman had his early troubles with the State Department. After telling how Edward R. Stettinius, his first secretary of state, had photostated and presented to the President in May, 1945, a copy of the President's own markings on a policy paper, Truman wrote: "Evidently some of the State Department boys believe nobody, not even the President of the United States . . . Must make changes." Stettinius was succeeded by Byrnes a few months later.

Army Starts New System

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new Army policy will release three months ahead of time all soldiers on involuntary active duty who have been rotated home from Korea.

The Army said the new program will equalize the length of service of men already back and those now being returned.

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SIDNEY HOOD, new manager of Rogers Jewelry Store here, came from Stockton and took over his position early last month. He replaced Mike Alesko who has gone to Rogers' Reno store. Mr. and Mrs. Hood are making their home in Shady Pine.

Tax Expert Gets Boot

WASHINGTON (AP) — Monroe D. Dowling, named seven months ago to replace an ousted internal revenue collector in New York City, has been ousted himself.

Revenue Commissioner John B. Dunlap Monday announced acceptance of Dowling's resignation, by request "in connection with an irregularity in one of his (personal) income tax returns." The action, Dunlap stressed, had nothing to do with Dowling's conduct in office.

Dowling was the Nation's eighth — and the New York City area's third — collector forced from office in the current investigation of tax irregularities. He was named by President Truman in August to succeed James W. Johnson and clean up the Upper Manhattan District.

Among the canvas-backs, a species of wild duck, males competing for a female's favor stage a chest-to-chest pushing contest in the water.

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a time-saving tip... look up numbers you're not sure of before you call

Have you ever had the feeling you're not quite positive of a familiar telephone number you're about to call? Your memory tells you it's 1338 . . . or is it 3138? If you'll take just a moment to look up the number in the telephone book—jot it down—then call, you'll be sure of the right number. You won't have to make the call a second time . . . and you'll avoid the embarrassment of calling the wrong number and having a stranger answer.

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