

Moscow Seeking New World Trade Outlet With Non-Red Areas

By TOM WHITNEY
 The week's hullabaloo over a proposed purchase of surplus uranium for the Soviet Union underlines one fact: Moscow is actively seeking to make the world of trade. The Soviet government agencies of other Communist governments are trying to buy and sell in the non-Communist world. In the non-Communist world, officials are interested. Gunnar Myrdal, secretary general of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, is making a tour of his territory which takes him to Moscow as well as capitals of various European nations with prospects for greater trade this year. The British government has given green light to a group of British businessmen who have gone to Moscow in search of orders. In 1953 the U.S.S.R. concluded pacts with the following nations outside the Iron Curtain: France, Finland, Iran, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Greece, Argentina, Afghanistan and others. Some of these were new; others represented an expansion of previous arrangements. European allies of the U.S.S.R. were active too. For instance, Czechoslovakia in the past months has made deals with Russia, India, Ceylon, Greece, the Netherlands, Brazil, Argentina and Bolivia. In the Far East the Chinese Communists have been making agreements, including about trade with non-Communist countries of Europe, Latin-America and elsewhere. About trade with the U.S.S.R. has been making a great deal of news in Britain and in Western Europe. Some news items have been widely publicized throughout the non-Communist world. For instance, when the Russians recently shipped to England nearly a hundred million dollars worth of gold, the world's press sat up and took notice. The journey by 39 British businessmen to Moscow has also aroused much interest. On the other hand, demands by McCarthy (R-Wis) for a program by the U. S. government against countries trading with Communists also got great publicity. What does the Communist trade amount to? How much of it is just sound and fury and how much of it is real cash on the barrelhead, real exchange of goods? It is hard to build up any comprehensive picture of the trade in terms of dollars and cents. Through the first nine months of 1953 the Soviet Union's trade with the non-Communist world declined about a third. The statistical office of the United Nations in releasing the side of the Communist bloc as a whole with the outside world would be roughly the same as in 1952. However, much of what the Russians and their Allies are doing in the field of concluding agreements cannot bear fruit in terms of actual trade until later this year, or even until 1955 or later.

In any case it is not the volume of trade between the Soviet bloc and the outside world—percentage-wise it constituted less than 2 per cent of total world trade in 1952—which makes this an important issue now. Some very important changes have recently taken place in both East and West which make it acute. In the West the international market has been transformed from a seller's market into a buyer's market. No longer are the post-war shortages the order of the day. Instead all Western countries now have surpluses of many goods for export and are actively seeking foreign markets. In this situation, with keen competition developing within the non-Communist world, many sellers are casting willing eyes in the direction of the vast markets controlled by communism in the East. And their governments are giving approval. In the East, with the death of Stalin and the inauguration of programs to speed up the increase in standard of living, there has arisen great demand for non-strategic consumer goods and foodstuffs which the Communist governments are willing to satisfy in part by purchases abroad. Deal after deal with non-Communist nations this year concluded by the Russians and their Allies has provided for supplying to Russia of non-strategic materials and foods, such as cloth from Italy or France or oranges from Israel. While the war was going on in Korea, while the markets for all export goods in the West were generally brisk, while the Communists were only interested in buying machinery and raw materials which had war potential, the issue was fairly clear cut. Now it's not. There are these fundamental factors: The Communists do get advantage from trade with the West. In the 30s Western equipment permitted them to industrialize the Soviet Union more rapidly. Right now the Communists are continuing their drive to industrialize the Communist world including China and they need capitalist help. While their interest in consumers goods and foodstuffs from the West this year is intense, the Reds continue to set their long term sights on breaking down completely the Western restrictions on trade in strategic goods and equipment. Their trade drive is not just "post-Stalin". It began before that. A year before Stalin's death the Russians organized the Moscow economic conference to dangle in front of Western businessmen orders for non-restricted commodities and the prospects for larger orders "should trade restrictions be abolished." The U.S.S.R. can, if it wishes, have great weight in international markets both as buyer and seller. The things it can export in large quantities make up a formidable list, and it can always use almost anything in its own economy or in its satellites which it can get from abroad.

How does Russia pay for goods bought abroad? The controlled economy lets Soviet rulers "make available" for export abroad just about anything produced in Russia. Coal, petroleum, machinery, automobiles, optical goods, food and thousands of other things—whether their supply outside Russia is short or not—can at the will of the government be shipped abroad to pay for imports. Russia was always a big gold producer. Her stocks of gold during the war were judged by experts in the neighborhood of two billion dollars. There is little reason to suppose they are much, if any less now. The Russians are going in for purchase of the export surpluses of a whole series of countries, from

Iceland to India. These are things which cannot be sold elsewhere. As the Russians buy, they furnish employment to workers in certain industries, profits to businessmen, and benefits to the government concerned. They pay for their purchases frequently in commodities, even strategic commodities, which would otherwise have to be purchased for hard currency. As they make such deals they acquire a certain increased political

and economic influence with the country where they purchased. They've gotten their foot in the door there. If they expand this foothold considerably they may some day be in a position to pull the rug out from under whole sectors of the economies of foreign nations. The Russians will have to multiply their trade with the West considerably in order to reach such a position with important Western European states. But such a prospect is a possibility in the long run. Whatever policy the U. S. government adopts, it seems fairly certain that in the coming years the U.S.S.R. will be a more important figure in world trade than ever in the past. This means that the butter and

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cottonseed oil will be the first such issue to come up for discussion here. The question of trade policy towards the Russians is on the agenda for 1954 and other years as well.

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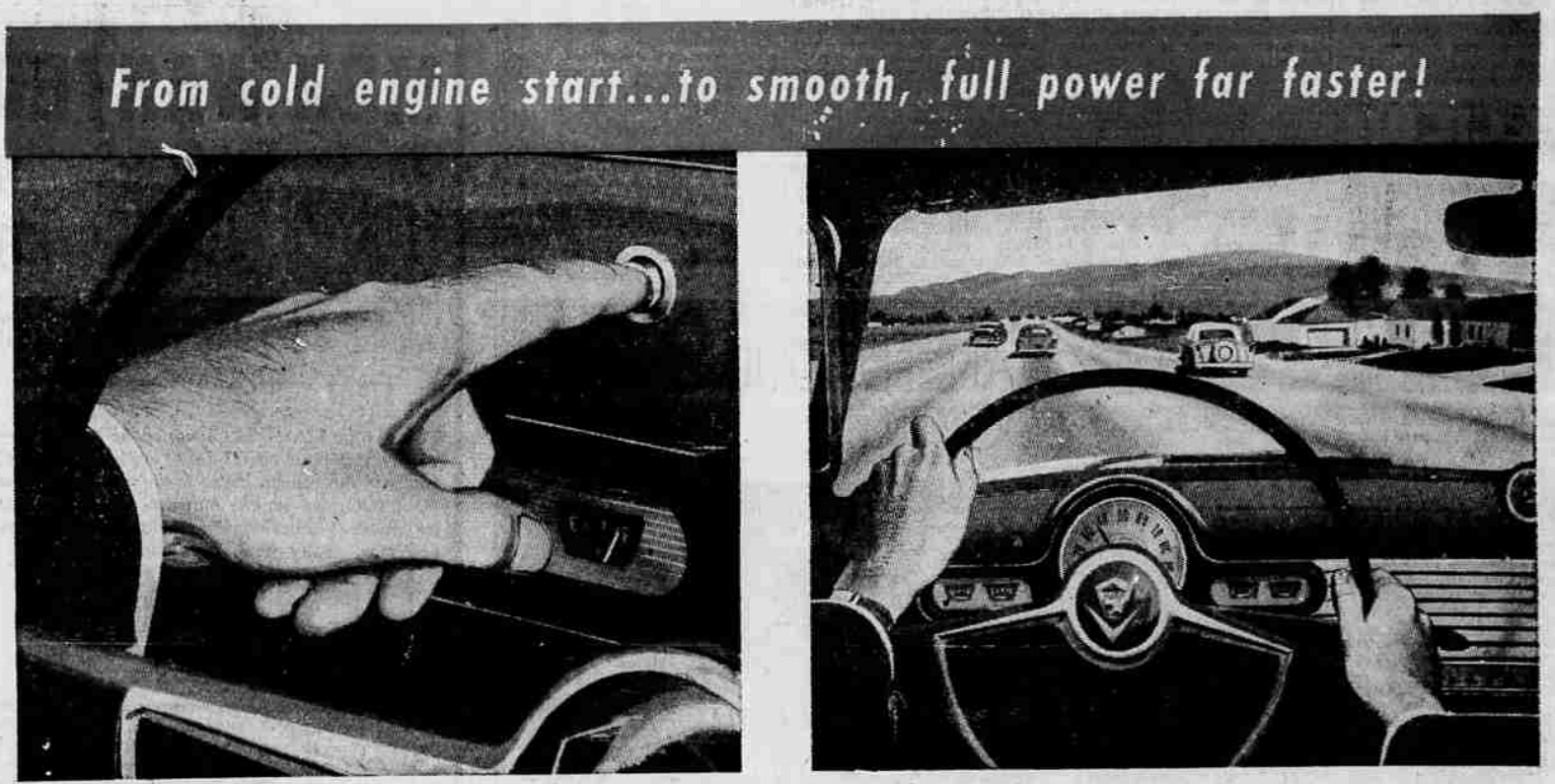
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 WASHINGTON (AP)—Ears pricked in the Senate yesterday when Sen. Wiley (R-Wis), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, referred in a speech to a "third type" of bomb. Wiley used the term while speaking for legislation to authorize U.S. participation with Canada in construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Questioned later, Wiley said his remark was based on newspaper articles speculating on "the A-bomb of the H-bomb and the other stuff." There has been speculation about possible development of a cobalt bomb even more destructive than atomic or hydrogen bombs.

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