



Who Will Investigate?

by Bryton Barron

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Fresh documentary evidence of the need for a full-fledged Congressional investigation of the State Department is contained in the report of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. It is the case of William Wieland, as unanimously approved by the Subcommittee last October, following extensive hearings. Here are excerpts from that report:

“He(Mr. Wieland) was appointed without any security check.

“(His appointment actually was effective before he even filled out any form of an application.)

“He falsified his job application by omission.

“When he later filled out an expanded personal history form, he falsified that by direct misstatement.

“Mr. Wieland had a hand in shaping our policy with respect to Cuba both before and after Castro’s takeover.

“He held a position which by definition made him one of the State Department’s experts in Latin American affairs, and Cuban affairs particularly. One of the things the Department paid him for was his expertise — his own judgment based on his own experience. Yet he never told his superiors officially or wrote in any Department paper, down to the very day when Fidel Castro stood before the world as a self-proclaimed Marxist, what he told friends privately as early as 1958 — or earlier — that Castro ‘is a Communist’ and ‘is surrounded by Commies (and) ... subject to Communist influences.’

“To Mr. Wieland’s desk came, over a period of years, great quantities of solid intelligence respecting the Communist nature and connections of the Castro movement, of Castro himself and his principal lieutenants. The committee was unable to document a single instance in which Mr. Wieland passed any of this material up to his superiors or mentioned it as credible in any report or policy paper.

“Mr. Wieland became an active apologist for Fidel Castro, even to the extent of openly contradicting intelligence officers who were attempting to brief Dr. Milton Eisenhower (then on an official trip to Mexico representing his brother, the President) respecting Communism in the Castro regime.

“Mr. Wieland eventually became the subject of a full-scale security investigation. He was ‘cleared’ improperly (in the name of the Secretary) by an official who ... at the time of the clearance had not read either the security file on Wieland or even the official summary and evaluation of that file.”

Highly revealing as to the attitudes in the State Department are these supplementary facts in the case of Wieland:

(1) After he had aided and abetted Castro’s rise to power, Wieland was awarded a promotion by the Department. (2) The security officer who later brought out the facts about Wieland was subsequently demoted. (3) The day after the Senate Subcommittee report on Wieland was made public, the State Department issued a statement in his defense.

One is reminded afresh of Dean Acheson’s dictum, following the conviction of Alger Hiss on perjury charges, that he would not turn his back on the man who had been false to his trust.

I

The Senate Subcommittee saw the larger significance of the Wieland case. “... his record and conduct and the handling of his security case combine to provide a case history which illustrates much of what is wrong with the

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State Department from a security standpoint.”

[It went on to say: “(or else State Department records were arranged after Wieland had been mentioned at a presidential press conference, so as to show that he had been cleared several months before. There is substantial evidence that this may have been the case,)” — Editor.]

Two other cases among the many which come to mind in this connection are those of Robert Strong and John Emmerson, both of whom, like Wieland, hold important posts. Robert Strong was the subject of sworn testimony some years ago to the effect that he had, when serving as the top United States diplomatic official on Formosa, sent out intelligence reports helpful to the Communists. The witness, Admiral Cooke, who was formerly Chief-of-Staff to Admiral King in the Pacific, found that in October and November of 1949 this State Department representative was reporting that Formosa would fall in a week or so and that the island of Quemoy had already been evacuated to the Reds. Yet in 1959 the State Department gave Strong a superior-service award, and recent listings show him as Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs; a standing in Mid East affairs similar to that which Wieland, as Director of the Office of Caribbean-Mexican Affairs, had in Latin American relations.

The other officer mentioned, John K. Emmerson, was recently assigned to the number two spot in the Far East, in the Embassy in Tokyo. Emmerson was one of the United States diplomats who served under General Wedemeyer and of whom the General wrote “not only that their sympathies lay with the Chinese Communists, but also that they were either consciously or unwittingly disseminating exaggerated or false, Communist-inspired reports.” Of Emmerson it should be added that the *Congressional Record* for March 1, 1957 told of a war-time recommendation by him that in making policy in Japan the United States should work through an organization which was subsequently exposed as Communist.

II

LAST YEAR, when Senate investigators probed the muzzling of military leaders who sought to alert all concerned to the Communist danger, it soon developed that the State Department was the basic offender in the censoring. Extensive exhibits which Senator Thurmond placed in the record left no doubt on this score. In his statement of conclusions after the completion of the Senate hearings, the Senator wrote:

“The State Department has made a concerted effort, to the limit of its power, to keep the facts (of the Cold War) from both the Congress and the people and, contrary to President Kennedy’s express desire, to prevent a full and free discussion of the issues the Nation faces. . . . This effort springs from the insecurity and ignorance which surround the State Department’s arguments on the nature of the communist threat and the policies which should be followed in combating that threat.”

To some it might appear harsh to attribute the Department’s efforts to ignorance, but actually the Senator was being too kind. For the censoring in truth reflected a lack of opposition to Communism both on the part of the men who wielded the red pencil and of the higher officials who laid down the guide lines for the censors. This was not something new in the State Department, however, for it has long been soft on Communism.

Wherever we turn in the hearings by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on the Wieland case, to which I have referred; in the hearings of the House Subcommittee which exposed the use of foreign aid supplies to develop Russian showplaces as Communist propaganda in Southeast Asia; in the hearings on the muzzling of our military leaders, which exposed the role of State Department censors; and in the hearings on the State Department appropriation requests, in the course of which the circulation of half-truths and “partial half-truths” in Intelligence reports was admitted — there is fresh added evidence of the unfitness of the State Department as presently constituted to safeguard the national interest.

III

IN RECENT MONTHS newsmen and the public generally have been outraged, and rightly so, by the assertion by government officials of a right to “manage” the news and to issue false statements when it pleased them to do

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so. As might be expected, the State Department was the first to make a practice of this, which it has been doing for years. Because I refused to be a party to misleading documentation by that agency, I gave up a career there in 1956. When I protested publicly against the sinister trend, I found myself ahead of my time, a voice crying in the wilderness. From Pearl Harbor to Yalta to the Bay of Pigs, men in high places have withheld information to which the public has every right; they have lied to us about secret deals and about the recent Red build-up in Cuba; they have fed us a propaganda line about foreign aid and about the UN; they have invoked secrecy to conceal disastrous planning and to protect evil-doers. Because foreign-policy issues now involve our very existence, every step possible must be taken to get the truth from the men who handle these matters. The dismal record of the post-war years warns us not to take them on blind faith.

To restore some semblance of sanity to the selection of men for key posts abroad, a congressional investigation, no less, will be required. Cases in point are those of our Ambassadors to Moscow, Paris, and Buenos Aires.

Foy Kohler, found some years back in an intoxicated condition in a wrecked car with secret papers in the trunk, served as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs while the Reds built the wall through Berlin — but did nothing to stop them. So last summer he was given the critical Ambassadorial post in Moscow.

Charles Bohlen, the arch defender of the Yalta betrayal, described by the late Senator Bridges as an experienced failure, made a mess of the Powers' U-2 affair. So Bohlen was sent as Ambassador to Paris.

Roy Rubottom, who telegraphed Governor Brown not to execute Chessman because it might annoy Uruguayans, was implicated with Wieland in the support given Castro. So Rubottom was given one of the best Ambassadorial posts in Latin America.

Turning for the moment from personnel cases and instances of maladministration in the State Department, we may note — in the policy realm — that the United States aid given Marshal Tito is fully established as the insane folly it was, now that he and Khrushchev have publicly embraced each other in recent months. But it will take Congressional action to remove from the payroll those State Department “experts” who persisted in maintaining the aid to Tito in the face of indignant protests from the grassroots of America.

IV

IN THE REALM of Policy there was one page of my book, *The Untouchable State Department*, which was almost invariably seized upon by reviewers for favorable comment, and I will therefore quote it at this point:

“What is wrong with the State Department is not simply that it is inefficient, despite the efforts of apologists to concentrate on that aspect of the situation. . . .

“Recent events have exposed the gravest weaknesses in the system, namely the bad judgment and influence of advisers and policy makers, as in the case of Wieland in the loss of Cuba to the Reds. Other defects of the system showed up in the inability (or unwillingness) to act promptly when the Reds began building the wall through Berlin; the indecent collaboration in brutal attacks on non-communists in Katanga; the clinging to discredited and dangerous policies which have involved us in meddling in the affairs of other countries the world over; the repeated affronts to NATO allies upon whom we had been told we must rely in a crisis; the excessive preoccupation with alien points of view, as in the Chessman case, demonstrating the strange concept that there is no difference between domestic and foreign affairs; the naïveté, or worse, in proposing disarmament and discussing it with the Reds; the perversion of foreign aid, originally proclaimed as a weapon against communism, to the point where we give help outright to the Reds; and the undercover campaign against anti-communism in the US, with simultaneous sly moves to play along with Khrushchev to the fullest extent that the public will tolerate.”

The need for a full-fledged Congressional investigation arises from the disastrous trend of foreign policy fully as much as it does from the malodorous personnel and administrative conditions already sketched. Recent months have witnessed the complete collapse of American policy — the repeated failure to eliminate the Communist

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cancer in Cuba, the loss of control in the UN to the Afro-Asian bloc, and the revolt in Europe against United States leadership. Our policy planners have been sadly wrong at every turn. Seldom, if ever in all our history as a great nation have our fortunes been at so low an ebb — or so badly handled.

The Kennedy-Rusk genius has been able, up to this writing, to come up with nothing more startling than the advancement of Averell Harriman to the number three post in the State Department and the resort to makeshift gestures abroad.

The promotion of Harriman in itself testifies to the dearth of talent among the New Frontiersmen in the diplomatic field, for he is a relic of FDR days, with a record that is by no means encouraging. It was Harriman as the Ambassador to Moscow for Roosevelt who failed to utter a word of protest to head off Stalin's outrageous demands for concessions in the Far East, when the latter presented them to him in late 1944. And it was Harriman who handled for FDR the negotiating of the infamous Kurile Islands agreement at Yalta in 1945, including the provision that FDR would compel Chiang Kai-shek to accept Russian demands when Stalin gave the word.

V

CHANGING a few men at the top will not greatly alter the situation in the State Department. Our foreign policy — with its giveaway programs and its attempts to appease the Reds — has for years gone on much the same from one administration to the next. There has been no basic shake-up in the staff at the working level, among the career experts" like Wieland — there are hundreds of them — who handle the day-to-day problems, "brief" the appointed officials, and prepare the necessary papers. It is among these "experts" if the that the shake-up must come if the disastrous trend of policy is to be reversed, but the shake-up will never come until Congress compels it.

Over the years, in service under seven successive Secretaries of State. I have seen one administrator after another come in pledged to clean up an Office, but almost invariably his zeal soon became tempered with good will for the men around him and a reluctance to hurt them, and in the end about all that was done was to move around a few desks and change some telephone numbers.

Years ago, in the days of the Teapot Dome scandal, we found that the Executive branch can not be trusted to cleanse its stables, that the Congress must step in and do it. Later came the Hiss case and the Communist penetration of the government, which a President dismissed as a "red herring." Still later came the 1952 pledge to clean up the mess, but the pledge went unredeemed when subordinate officials in the State Department stymied the housecleaning. And now we have a President who publicly defended William Wieland.

Last year when the Senate was not on the trail of the censors who were preventing our military leaders from warning us of the full significance of the Communist threat, it developed that these offenders were State Department officials, whereupon the Administration quickly invoked the claim of "executive privilege" — aptly rechristened by Senator Thurmond as "the Executive Fifth Amendment" — to prevent investigators from learning exactly who the culprits were and what their excuses were. It was, as Senator Thurmond said, a move "to protect . . . the untouchable State Department and its no-win policies of defeatism in the Cold War."

VI

CERTAINLY the housecleaning cannot be left to the present top officials of the State Department. It will be recalled that Dean Rusk, when Assistant Secretary of State under Dean Acheson, displayed an amazing lack of insight in hailing Mao Tse-tung as the George Washington of China. Subsequently he urged one of the foundations to grant funds to the Institute of Pacific Relations, at about the same time that a Congressional committee was uncovering the fact that the latter organization was an instrument of Communist policy. I met Mr. Rusk when he first came into the State Department to take over the post formerly held by Alger Hiss. I had been called in to give the newcomer some background information. I must not have done a very good job of it, for Mr. Rusk has been wrong about nearly everything ever since.

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As for the Under Secretary, George Ball, I am reminded of the conclusion of Senator Thurmond after interrogating that official:

“There can be no more vivid demonstration of the need for wide-spread education on Communist techniques than this — that the number two officer in our State Department can demonstrate such ignorance and incompetence in the field of Communist tactics.”

Nor can the housecleaning task be left to some one official provided by Congressional enactment. This was attempted in 1953, when the post of Under Secretary of State for Administration was authorized by Congress and it was filled by the appointment of a successful businessman from the Middle West. The gentleman left after one year, unable to obtain cooperation within the bureaucracy. The security officer he had installed, with strong support from Capitol Hill, eventually yielded to pressure. Later, the son of a former President was brought in, but he was forced out before he had time to get a firm grip on the situation.

John Foster Dulles, for all his reputed inflexibility and personal force, succumbed and eventually reversed himself on nearly every issue on which he had taken a stand before assuming the Secretaryship.

It is the “faceless brigade,” the men at the working level, rather than the officials whose names are frequently in print, whom we have to fear most. It is for that reason that a full-fledged investigation by a Congressional committee is needed to identify, by the record, those State Department officials like Wieland whose activities and recommendations have been harmful to the national interest — the investigation to be followed by the creation of a watchdog committee to see that needed changes are actually carried out.

This proposed investigation must be recognized as an over-riding issue, for several reasons. (1) The disaster-potential in State Department’s activities has been sharply demonstrated in Cuba; the Reds would not even be there today but for the early support given Castro by subordinate officials in Foggy Bottom. (2) The State Department dictates to other government departments and agencies, while for Members of Congress there is always the spectre of what happened to McCarthy after he dared to challenge that Department. (3) Every effort is seemingly being made to negotiate this great nation into military helplessness and to reduce the United States to the status of a province in a world state, subject to occupation Katanga-fashion by foreign troops and bound by the rulings of a foreign tribunal wholly unsympathetic with our traditions and way of life.

Congress simply *must* investigate the State Department! Failure to do so immediately may well prove fatal.