

Diplomacy After Hours—Part II

Austin Cross

Benelux Folk

PERHAPS the ablest diplomat we ever had—with one exception—was His Excellency J. H. van Roijen, the Netherlands Ambassador now accredited to Washington. Just as Uncle Sam's Ralph Bunche with much publicity settled the Israel dispute, so did van Roijen evolve the formula for the Indonesian settlement. Only the large Jewish population in the States was a public worth catering to, by the world press services, and so he caught the headlines. Equally important to the world was the settling of the Indonesian trouble. But the press of the world ignored van Roijen. I always thought he was one of the most under-estimated diplomats in the world, and that he is one of the truly great statesmen of the age.

We have so many good men from Europe. Viscount Alain du Pare, the Belgian Ambassador, is a wonderful man. He lives tranquilly with the Baroness in the old home of Sir Frederick Borden, who was Sir Wilfred Laurier's Minister of Militia for 15 years. A diplomat and a gentleman, he manages to keep out of the news pretty well, and is a self-effacing man.

Unquestionably, the Belgian who supplies the color is Baron Pierre de Gaiffier, and his beautiful, chic, Chinese-born wife. The Baroness is delightful, and no mistake. The de Gaiffiers have a little estate on the outskirts of Aylmer, Quebec, and people every year look forward to an outing on their spacious lawns. The Baron, who is

No. 2 at the embassy, is a pleasant personality. But the Baroness, whom the Baron first met when she was on the Chinese Embassy staff, always is the cynosure of attention wherever she goes. Everybody likes her, likes to look at her. She is one of the real ornaments along Diplomatic Row.

Acropolis Postscript

THE Greeks have made their contribution. The first ambassador, Mr. Constantine Sakellaropoulo was a thin slight man with an aesthetic appearance. Shy on English when he first got here, his blond wife, who seemed to speak all languages successfully, managed the language problem for him in the early days. They had a long, rather narrow suite in the Chateau Laurier facing the Parliament Buildings. This was once occupied by none less than Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, when he was Prime Minister of Canada. But it is a cinch the Greeks did not get such a bargain basement rate as Sir Henry Thornton charged R. B. The CNR president, hoping to soften the blow, he knew was coming, offered the suite at \$300 odd per month. Bennett showed his gratitude by firing Sir Henry. The S's stayed in Ottawa a long time, but finally the courteous, wispy little ambassador, who might have passed as a brother of Vincent Massey's, went back to his native Hellas.

There is one caution to cite, if your mind runs to things of the gullet. The Greeks

have an enticing beverage called ouzo. It probably is a second cousin to absinthe, and if partaken of, it is herewith prescribed in medicinal rather than recreational doses.

Turkish Delights

AH yes, the Turks. Straddling the Bosphorus as they do, these picturesque people are half European, half Asiatic. The first plenipotentiary was Sevki Alhan Bey, a blond, blue eyed man who looked like your idea of the typical Englishman. His suffix, Bey, I was told by a Yugoslav diplomat long since departed, meant he had the rank of a Pasha, or lord. This was given him by Abdul Hamid, later known as Abdul the Damned.

The first thing this handsome Turk told me was that he wanted to keep out of the press. I agreed not to quote him unless I specifically checked with him. Judge my amazement when he was spread all over Page 1, next week, of my opposition, in an interview. The by-line said Helen Gougeon. La Belle Gougeon, a lovely girl who toiled on the *Journal* for years, had convinced him that while it might be dangerous to give interviews to grey-haired male reporters, it was perfectly all right to give the same story to pretty blonds. I learned about Turks from the Bey.

Later, our Turk went out to Hollywood, and came back, burning with the desire to write a book. This he did, but apparently no one would publish it. So he paid for it himself. If you run across a volume called *Goddess in Slacks*, that will be Hollywood à la Turk.

The ambassador had planned to retire to the banks of the Nile, and I believe had taken a property there. Unhappily, he did not survive some New York surgery, and he died.

The ambassador lived in some style at a suite in the Chateau, but his refreshments were strictly Ottawa in concept.

The next Turkish plenipotentiary was Muzaffer Goker, a pleasant man who smiled a lot and said little, and he was promoted to Moscow from Ottawa.

After that came a man who never got here, to put it the Irish way. But he was succeeded by His Excellency Numan Tahir

Seyman. I met him at the Polish Legation residence, and found out he spoke French but little English. So I opened up with my Ontario High School French and with a little help from Emile Bisang, the No. 2 down at the Swiss Legation, we managed.

While still with the Turks, I recall one interesting boy from the Bosphorus who kept the girls a-twitter. He never revealed whether he was married or not. Say what you like, the Turks seemed to have a way with women.

Chiang's Dying Embassy

THE Chinese live on, somehow, in the old home of Sir Robert Borden. In the old days when Chiang kai-shek rode high, the then ambassador, Dr. Liu was a delightful personality with a wonderful sense of humor, he could sling slang or mince Oxford English with equal aplomb, and he was a great guy. All his Chinese friends were interesting, too. But the new man never showed any interest in me. I don't get asked down there, and with what's left of the old mob tied up in Formosa, the Chinese Embassy today, needing paint, looking shabby from the outside and apparently part of a dying dynasty, has been all but written off. Sic tempora mundi.

Commonwealth Cavalcade

WE now come to the Commonwealth. The British do things about the way you would expect the British to do things. They took over Sir John A. Macdonald's old home. (The feckless Tories, who have no sentiment outside a cash register, have twice passed up a chance to get a real home for their leader. They let the British grab Earncliffe, home of Sir John A. Macdonald, while the Chinese secured Sir Robert Borden's old home).

The rather effortless comfort of Earncliffe appeals to you, and when you come in on a special errand, all alone, you rather wish they'd leave you there for the day, so you could loaf around.

Many of their cocktail parties—or more properly, receptions—are held outdoors.

The spacious grounds, which face the Ottawa River, make an ideal site. There is enough parking space, on the half empty streets around, and as you walk in, Sir Alexander and Lady Clutterbuck are on a knoll on the lawn to greet you. Then you move on to the refreshment tables. Those who discriminate in such things give the Clutterbucks top marks for their choice of Scotch. The rare pinch bottle, a distillation attributed to Messrs. Haig and Haig, is found in abundance. Whiskey and soda is served in the proper English way. Those too, who crave tea, get it, in the way they should get tea. All in all, the United Kingdom does very well by its guests, and when, at the very pukka affairs, there is band music, you feel not too far removed from a garden party at Buckingham Palace. Well, you can always imagine things, can't you . . .

THE South Africans have done very nicely, lately. Located at the gate to Rideau Hall, they have a fine, remodelled home, a small garden for over-flow, and a cool rumpus room downstairs. The previous incumbent P. R. Viljoen, did about everything wrong he could, around here, even rowing with the railways over paying for furniture shipments. His staff didn't like him, and everybody was glad to see the last of him. Not Boer, but boor, was he. He went to Australia. By contrast, the new man, Adrian Roberts, is a delightful personality, and has done much to keep the Malan government well represented in Ottawa. The South African specialty is Van der Hum, a brandy liqueur.

IT always seems we do not see enough of the New Zealanders. They live on Wurtemberg street, entertain modestly, and remember names properly. Strangest diplomatic move they ever made was when a man called Langstone came all the way from Wellington to be minister, got into a tiff by cable with his government, and went home in a huff. He was hardly known to half a dozen of the press in Ottawa, but I remember him for his raw, bony hands, his labourite approach. The Thornes who succeeded him were delight-

ful people, but they were always being seconded to Lake Success, and we rarely saw them.

The next in the Antipodean succession was T. C. A. Hislop. Thanks to his easily recalled first initials, and thanks also to a more aggressive gregariousness, Hislop has probably done more to advertise those nice people, the New Zealanders, in Ottawa, than any of the extremely pleasant but rather self-effacing people we have had in the past from down Wellington way.

THE Australians are hearty people who like to entertain. One of the most aggressive and attractive men in Ottawa's Diplomatic Row is Michael Francis Forde. This Down Under High Commissioner and one-time Australian Prime Minister combines personal charm with hard boiled realism. I think his success is ascribable to the fact that he really likes people. And Ottawa. Michael Forde entertains at the drop of an excuse. His big front room fills quickly, he has a cheery word for every guest, and utilitarian food after that. Mrs. Ford, mother of several, is a realist like her husband, enjoys people, and manages her social duties with an offhand efficiency that shows she's been around.

But no account of the Australians would be complete without something being said of Thomas Dunabin, their press attaché. Broad shouldered, and with a typewriter stoop from meeting so many deadlines, not only is old Tom a great news man, but he happens to be omniscient. Walking encyclopedia on Australia, a voracious reader, wise beyond all belief in the ways of a city desk, he can smell a story farther than most editors, and he writes such stuff as no desk man dares turn down.

If you asked him to tie up Tasmania and Iceland, within an hour he'd have an anecdote for a speech, for a headline, for a cocktail story. Dunabin is Australia's greatest 20th century gift to Canada.

THE Indians are still just feeling their way here, in a sense. After the turbaned Malik moved on to Paris (his big moment was when he entertained the Mountbattens) he was replaced by the non-turbaned S. K. Kripalani. But the

sets of friends enjoyed by the first were not necessarily known to the second, and it took a while for the new man, a long-time resident of San Francisco, to get located here. As soon as he did, he was called home. Cultured, scholarly, he was rapidly expanding his circle, when, just like that, he was washed up.

One thing I have got a hint of; there is enormous jealousy among the Indians, and apparently they all seem to keep their eyes on the other, and they are not above tattling. I know this; I never heard any diplomat run down and abused so much as I did one day in a walk from the Chateau to the main gate of Parliament. One Indian really "sang" when he squealed on another.

One victim of the Kripalani regime was Bernard Fonseca. It was in his home that I had my one and only Indian meal so far. In the modest abode of this press attaché, out on Carling in Westboro, I sampled Mrs. Fonseca's delightful cooking. I recall something flavoured with roses, I scented the spices and flavours of the Orient, but I was in a state of pleasant bewilderment. Interesting too was the fact that the other guests were Mr. and Mrs. Mysak. It was about the last chat I had with the Polish press attaché and his wife before they went back home to Warsaw.

PAKISTAN had its biggest day when the late Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali was here. The garden party down at their attractive Rockcliffe home was outstanding, and easily was one of the big social events of 1950. I remember a little group of Iron Curtain diplomats having a convivial beverage together, I recall the gay summer dresses of the ladies, I cannot forget the social twitter against a background of band music.

In the morning, the Begum—that's Mrs. Liaquat Ali in our language—was electrifying us at the airport with an interview on polygamy, when Howard Measures, then chief of protocol, led the Begum away from this fascinating subject. Somehow we never got round to polygamy again during her whole visit.

We were all so sorry to learn of the

Prime Minister's assassination a year later; Liaquat Ali was quite a guy.

Then there is this clinical note; the Pakistan Embassy has the finest collection of Ottawa girls any foreign power has assembled. Their secretariat was doubtless picked to be efficient, but it also happens to be aesthetic.

The Pakistan people now wear these Jinnah hats, little lamb fur hats made in Karachi and cut in the same style as those worn by Pakistan's first prime minister, the late Mr. Jinnah.

Emerald Islanders

THE Irish are not in the Empire any longer, according to the papers. But John Hearne, the former High Commissioner, was a delightful host. It is the only diplomat's place I have gone to, that runs to parish priests. The cassocks and soutans of the local clergy are quite conspicuous. That's why you hear so much of "How are you father", "Glad to see you father" and so on. Do not imagine they cast any pall on the proceedings. On the contrary, being Irish, for the most part, they are gay of heart and bright of soul. With discreet potions of the smoothest Irish whiskey, the hours go by like minutes. I have not been entertained by the new ambassador, Sean Murphy, yet, but I am sure he will be as radiant and gracious a host as was his predecessor. But don't expect Irish cuisine. Irish whiskey, yes, Irish food, no.

Americans, Great and Otherwise

FINALLY, there are the Yanks. Here I could really write a book. But I am going to give it to you, in capsule form. Briefly, we have had a series of inadequate ambassadors, of inverted snobs, of Americans trying to act like Englishmen. The snobbery of the Yanks was incredible. Remember in *Strange Interlude*, how Eugene O'Neill has a character say: "Freshmen from Iowa sounding broad A's at Harvard." We had stuffed shirts from the Jayhawker Country trying to act like the Cliveden set.

The height of stupidity came after the war, when a Republican crowd of isolationists who hated Roosevelt ran the show for a Democratic regime. Their day was only a success when they made the social column. When General Ike Eisenhower came, a chap called Lewis Clark, or Clark Lewis, an insufferable nobody who had charge of such things, went through and proscribed the lists, banning people right and left. Lady reporters could not see Mrs. Eisenhower. Only three or four newspapermen went to the cocktail party. The Mounted Police got into a jam by taking orders from the United States Embassy, and the Citizen's Captain Verner Bower, who got jostled, wrote such a potent piece about it that Mr. King said a few crisp words on the phone. That ended rough stuff from the Mounties.

Once, a very clever public relations man on the Embassy staff got into a row with an ambassador and a minister. This public relations fellow was clever, and acted as Seeing Eye Dog to the plenipotentiary. In due course, they tried to fire the Seeing Eye Dog. But the S. E. D. went to Washington, lined up Senator Austin of Vermont, the ambassador and minister were called down to Washington, the press attaché beat the both, was restored to his job, the ambassador was told off, the minister advised to mend his ways, and all have now departed.

But the golden age came when Laurence Steinhardt arrived. Though he had matched brains with Stalin, fought the wily van Papen in Ankara, and had come off far from second best with Klement Gottwald in Prague, Larry Steinhardt had the common touch. He got to know everybody in Ottawa, saw through them like plate glass, but loved them just the same. The number of persons who boasted they knew him is still incredible. Steinhardt was a great American, but he became a great Canadian too. He went to bat for us, twice, on really big things. He could pick up the phone, and call President Truman, and ask for action. And get it.

When his plane crashed last spring, it desolated us all. It was the end of the Augustan Age of perfect relations between Ottawa and Washington.

No wonder *Time* magazine refers to the starchy welcome Canada gave his successor, Stanley Woodward. The truth is that Ottawa was still grief stricken. Nobody really cares whom Washington sends to Canada. With Steinhardt gone, what does it matter.

In 1950, the Yanks went back to their old stuffy ways, the privileged few at entertainments, no Fourth of July Garden Party, no common touch. Generally speaking an era of sedateness and dullness has settled over the US Embassy, and we are now as unspectacularly represented in Ottawa as Canada is at Washington.

The Germans Again

THEN the Germans arrived. As one who had seen the Germans leave Montreal in 1939, it was interesting to welcome the Germans back. Only the Nazis that left so cockily in September of the war were a different breed of cat than the well mannered and gentlemanly Germans who returned here the winter of 1951.

The Germans played it awfully safe. For one thing, they almost seeped into town. For another, they insisted on talking French, figuring it was perhaps better that way.

I had to dig out the first representative, Eugen Lorz, who somehow found a very humble apartment in the midst of the deepest snowdrifts at the back end of Eastview. Lorz was fluent in French, as was inevitably his Swiss-born wife. I think he was embarrassed by my presence. But when he saw how cautiously and amiably I handled him in the press, I think he felt a lot better.

Eugen Lorz, whom I dubbed "the ambassador," was a pleasant fellow with stiff German bows, a mouth full of silver dental work, a ready smile, and after you broke through his reserve, a radiant personality. Obviously not of diplomatic status, he was nevertheless a good guy.

The next they sent was Dr. J. F. Ritter. He was pale, diffident, nervous, and still kissed ladies' hands, European style. He too, was eager with the *parlez-vous*, but shied from English. All I can say was

that he, like Lorz who went before, and Dankwort, who came later, was terribly, terribly scared.

After all, we had been at war.

Finally, along came Dr. Werner Dankwort, temporarily as consul general, but obviously earmarked to be the first ambassador to Canada from Germany. He too was pale, he too was nervous, he too was heavy on the French. For instance, after we had duly and dutifully photographed him, and asked the conventional nothings, all in English, he turned in farewell and said "*Merci pour le bon accueil.*"

In due course, a more confident Dankwort greeted me at the embassy upon the occasion of issuing the first passport, and later, in Parliament I introduced him to Irving Studer, M.P. for Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, who could *Sprechen ein wenig Deutsch* too. Dr. Dankwort will be interested to recall that I also introduced him to the man who within a couple of months was to be the new lieutenant governor of Ontario, His Honour Louis O. Breithaupt.

So the Germans are back. They have a press attaché who speaks with an English accent in Dr. Edgar Gerwin, and things are picking up where they left off before the war. Countries cannot hate each other forever. At 580 Chapel Street a modest start has been made on the new West Germany Embassy for Canada.

From Enemy to Ally

WHO can forget Pearl Harbor? And who the Japanese? Now they are back.

The Japs were the original trinity of countries represented here diplomatically. When we blossomed into a country (or realm as we seem to be in 1952!) from a colony, we embraced Japan, the United States and France. There came to Ottawa a Mr. Tokugawa, and he was quite an impressive figure. His dignity in white tie and tails was unimpeachable, and he somehow contrived to make you feel squalid. I remember one time seeking him at the Ritz in Montreal, and I felt like a one man slum beside him. He moved on home, and recent reports from Canadians back from

Nippon report that he is still interested in Canada and Canadians.

It was Baron Tomii, I think who had the traditional job of burning the secret papers, and one can well wonder what secrets went up the flue in smoke after December 7, 1941. Anyway, after he left, the Japanese minister's "white" chauffeur was interviewed by the papers, but he revealed nothing.

Now the Japs are back. They first took a suite at the Chateau. There one interviewed K. Narita, in charge of the Japanese Overseas Agency. Beside him were Jap-made objets d'art, and surprisingly enough, little Japanese prayer beads and crucifixes.

Mr. Narita put in a spell at Moscow and other places before coming to Ottawa. Possessed of an excellent English vocabulary, he was the right man to open up trade again. Smart as a whip, he was surrounded by some keen traders and diplomats too.

As happens to most diplomats, he moved out of the Chateau, and into Ottawa's first new skyscraper (10 storeys!) since the war. There the Japanese agency still goes on. But some day soon it will become an embassy, and Narita will be His Excellency the Ambassador.

I saw the Germans and the Italians and the Japs go, I saw them all come back.

Now when the Roumanians come back, my list will be complete. I waved them goodbye too.

WELL, that's the works. They come and they go. Some diplomats you get to know and love, some you never know at all. I would not know the present Mexican ambassador if I saw him. Yet I knew del Rio well enough to send him a postcard one time, when I was in Juarez, Mexico. I said that Uruguay's Bustamente doesn't know me. I don't know any newspaperman who has laid eyes on Thor Thors, Iceland's accredited minister, who gives his address thus: Chateau Laurier (absent). He stays all the time in Washington, D.C.

Some go on to great jobs, like the Dutch ambassador moving to Washington, the Turkish plenipotentiary to Moscow. Some

get fired. All are caught alike from time to time, in political upsets, and have to get for home. Some pull off great deals, some give us the double cross.

Back Stage

I think the most interesting feature of entertaining in the Capital is the flying squad of cooks, waiters, butlers, and flunkeys who follow the cocktails around. You can send for Mrs. So and So, and for a sliding scale, depending on when she is expected in your kitchen, and depending on how many you are serving, she will prepare your meal.

There are caterers who are always available, with their inevitably identifiable sandwiches.

But the announcers and waiters are the most interesting. One man, borrowed from a government post, bawls out a name that you never heard of before, but which turns out to be yours. Others have your name down cold. One announcer, with a faulty memory, said the Czech envoy did not turn up at a Russian cocktail party, and a reporter took his word for it. Result, one very angry Czech, one very abject newspaper apology. There are high school teachers who double up this way with the drinks to make a dollar, and who get to know each man's recipe for a quick one. You may see this flying squadron, day after day barking a wrong name, delivering a drink deftly, quick-stepping behind the buffet.

Diplomacy After Hours is the last of a series of two articles in lighter vein on Ottawa's Diplomatic Corps.

No Eight-Hour Pioneers

I am wondering what would have happened to me by now if fifty years ago some fluent talker had convinced me to the theory that it was not fair to my fellow workers to put my best efforts into my work. I am glad that the eight-hour day had not been invented when I was a young man. If my life had been made up of eight-hour days, I do not believe I could have accomplished a great deal. This country would not amount to as much as it does if young men of fifty years ago had been afraid that they might earn more than they were paid for.

THOMAS EDISON.