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These Days . . . . . By George E. Sokolsky

Whose Antennae?

MRS. ELEANOR Roosevelt has been publishing an interesting series of articles about herself in The Saturday Evening Post. They are, in many ways, a postscript to her autobiography.

Sokolsky

The particular article to which I refer contains some criticism of John Foster Dulles, our Secretary of State, which requires examination. The matter comes up in relationship to Nehru of India, for whom Mrs. Roosevelt has considerable admiration, she says:

". . . I cannot help but feel that Mr. Dulles fails to understand the feelings of many of the peoples with whom we must deal — that he lacks antennae with which to reach out and sense the attitudes of others at times when such attitudes may be of utmost importance in our struggle against communism."

The question, of course, is whether the Secretary of State is a good-will ambassador or a finely schooled strategist in international relations, prepared by knowledge and experience to negotiate with other countries in the interests of the United States. That phrase, "in the interests of the United States," may not concern Mrs. Roosevelt too much because she is devoting the latter years of her life to the interests of the United Nations and there could be a conflict of interest.

IT MIGHT BE argued that a good negotiator is one who understands those with whom he negotiates, but it cannot be argued that he is any good if he is always conceding to the other side, always sacrificing the interests of his own nation. In the long history of sacrificing the United States from 1933 to 1948, the record is so one-sided that surely some country in this world ought to be grateful to the United States. After World War I, at any rate, Finland was grateful and paid its debts. After World War II, such countries as India have shown no gratitude whatsoever for this country. Their attitude might be summed up in the phrase, "What have you done for me lately?"

The reason Mrs. Roosevelt desires Secretary of State Dulles to have antennae which reach out and sense the attitudes of others is that the aforesaid others "may be of utmost importance in our struggle against communism." But these others, even after receiving such gracious aid at the hands of the Government of the United States, in most instances have been neutral between the United States and Soviet Russia. Nehru, for instance, is neutral.

What particular value is it to have a Secretary of State who gives up the taxpayers' earnings until it hurts and all we get for it is the kind of neutralism which Nehru produced in India and Sukarno produced in Indonesia?

ANOTHER generalization in this article that requires correction is the following:

"I remember when President Truman sent Gen. George C. Marshall to China during the critical days of the civil war, to attempt to persuade Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to inaugurate governmental reforms in an effort to unite all factions . . ."

That was not Gen. Marshall's task. Gen. Marshall's task was to intervene in the civil war which was occurring in China between the government which was our ally and the Chinese Communists who were serving Soviet Russia. Gen. Marshall's activities were such that the Chinese Communists were able to gain, after a long truce, a strategic position in Manchuria which resulted first in the conquest of China by Russia, one of the most serious defeats this country encountered in its history, and secondly, the Soviet direction of the Korean war which has proved so disastrous to us.

Mrs. Roosevelt is critical of Madame Chiang Kai-shek. She says:

". . . I think that intellectually she understands what democracy means, but despite the fact that she went to college in this country she does not know how to live democracy."

Madame Chiang, Mei-Ling Soong, came to the United States when she was a young child, lived with Bishop Ainsworth in Macon, Ga., and then studied at Wellesley College. I have known Madame Chiang as girl and married woman nearly 40 years. She was a close friend of my first wife and there were times, when we were younger, when we saw each other daily. Madame Chiang may not confuse disorderly living with democracy, but she is as trained in the American concept of life as any girl can be who spends most of her childhood and youth in this country.

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