

MARSHALL

L.I. - P. + S. Wednesday, May 12, 1948.

Washington today had one of the biggest news conferences on record -- two hundred reporters cramming into a room at the State Department. In the crowd, sat Secretary of State George Marshall. He was giving his first official statement on the surprise diplomatic move made by Soviet Russia yesterday.

All the world has been agog, wondering about Molotov's declaration that the United States had proposed an American-Soviet peace parley to settle the cold war. Molotov saying that he'd accept the invitation. All day yesterday our State Department had nothing to say -- that being left until today, at Secretary Marshall's news conferences.

To the throng of reporters, the Secretary of State, in a deliberate voice, read a deliberately worded declaration. This, for one thing, bore out what we heard yesterday -- that our government did not issue any invitation for big-time American-Soviet negotiations. Nothing of that sort ~~was~~ meant in the communication that our Ambassador to Moscow, Bedell Smith, gave to Foreign

Minister Molotov on Tuesday of last week. Molotov simply picked out a conventional polite phrase about peace and good-will, and twisted it around to mean an invitation.

Secretary Marshall today reaffirmed in the most positive way that the whole purpose of the American communication was to assure Soviet Russia that this country was determined and firm in its foreign policy. Secretary Marshall explained that Washington was trying to keep Moscow from getting ideas from the hurly-burly of our Presidential campaign -- ideas that arguments and controversies among ~~xxxxxxx~~ candidates might mean that the United States is wavering and uncertain in its attitude toward Soviet aggression.

The Secretary said that there would be no two-power American-Soviet discussion of matters that concerned other countries. He pointed out that we already have ample diplomatic machinery, in which all the countries concerned might have their say in an attempt to end the cold war. There's the United Nations, the

four-power control commission in Germany, and the control commissions in Austria and Korea. The Secretary declared that what was needed was ~~x~~, not a two-power discussion, but something plain and clear to ~~indicate~~ indicate that Soviet Russia is willing to make an agreement of such questions as Germany, Austria and Korea. If the Soviets want a settlement of these problems, let them come forward with specific offers.

In all this, the Secretary of State was answering misgivings expressed in London and Paris, the suspicion that the sudden Molotov maneuver might mean that something was going on backstage between Washington and Moscow, maybe some sort of ~~x~~ American appeasement of Soviet Russia.

In the London Parliament today, British Foreign Secretary Bevin stated bluntly that he is opposed to any headline parley with Soviet Russia, unless Moscow makes plain-out proposals -- "The Soviet cards on the table," as Bevin expressed it. He said that, until then, he doesn't want to go into any further conferences

-- he has had too many conferences.

That British view was echoed today by Secretary ~~of State~~ Marshall, who said: "We have had a long and bitter experience with such efforts. We cannot afford a continuation of such failures."

Well, the record is only too plain. We know what resulted from those famous Roosevelt-Stalin meetings, as at Yalta -- great concessions made by us, followed by Soviet bad faith. The same for Truman and Stalin at Potsdam -- after which all the other big-time conferences ~~had~~ ended in failure, because of Soviet obstruction. <sup>R</sup> There has been talk of another turn of spectacular international show business -- a Truman-Stalin meeting, ~~but~~ President Truman has shown plainly that he has no enthusiasm for another meeting with Stalin -- and many of us ~~may~~ wonder why mighty decisions have to be made in a melodramatic palaver between two men in the style of sovereign autocrats. That is hardly in the American tradition of government, the President of the United States being no sovereign autocrat.

## SUBSTITUTE PALESTINE

(The last-minute American idea for Palestine was disclosed at the U N tonight. This time the proposal is -- a high commissioner.) The scheme would be to name a U N official who would have no governmental powers, no political authority of any sort. (He would be in Palestine merely to run as many administrative services as possible -- water supply, electricity, transport.) He would likewise mediate, if possible, in the warfare between the Jews and Arabs. This proposed high commissioner for the United Nations would seem to be something of a ghostly figure, for all of his lofty title.

The fact ~~is~~ of the matter is that the American proposal is designed to get some kind of United Nations authority in Palestine -- some sort of U N representative, even though he might be a mere shadow. ~~It~~ It is believed by the United Nations <sup>that it may be</sup> ~~possible to do~~ ~~something~~ effective -- just having a high commissioner there, on the spot.

This plan was explained by members of the American delegation to newsmen this evening, and an effort will be made to get it accepted by the General Assembly not later than midnight Friday, when the British ~~mandate~~ mandate expires. So, the next two days will witness an American attempt to get a favorable vote on the plan to name a high commissioner -- very high but with little authority.

The news from Palestine gives us a report at Tel Aviv that American Secretary of State Marshall has sent a personal message to David Ben Gurion, who has been designated as Premier of the independent Jewish State. Tonight in Washington ~~the~~ Secretary Marshall refused to make any comment on this, but the (word from Tel Aviv suggested that the United States government ~~is~~ is trying to persuade the Zionists to delay the formal proclamation -- of a Jewish state) -- until something ~~can~~ <sup>can</sup> be done by the United Nations. How much truth there is in the story of a message from Secretary of State Marshall to Prime Minister designate Ben Gurion we do not know -- but it may tie in with the

proposal for a high commissioner.

The dispatch from (Tel Aviv says that matters have probably gone too far to ~~permit~~ permit any delay in the proclamation of a Jewish state) which indeed would seem to be borne out by a gathering of Jewish leaders at the home of David Ben Burion ~~tonight~~ <sup>today.</sup> They met to discuss plans for the proclamation, the moment the deadline comes along -- the termination of the British mandate, Friday midnight.

The proclamation is not so simple as it might seem, because midnight Friday begins the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday. Traditionally, nothing is transacted on a biblical day of rest, and there may be some ~~men~~ scruples. But undoubtedly they will stretch a religious point, and at the break of the Sabbath they will proclaim the birth of a nation which will probably be called - the State of ~~the~~ Israel. The people at Tel Aviv are awaiting eagerly. We hear that Jewish school children are singing "we want to wake up in the Jewish state on the Sabbath morning."

Meanwhile, that venerable area of this earth called the Holy Land, is in a technical state of war on all its borders. Today Jewish militia, Haganah, issued a general invasion alert, the Zionist army made ready <sup>for</sup> battle. At the same time, Haganah closed the Jewish borders facing the Lebanon, Syria, trans-Jordan and Egypt -- stopping all civilian traffic.

To complete the picture, ~~now~~ here's a bulletin from Cairo which states that the Egyptian Cabinet has drafted a proclamation of martial law. Moreover a Cairo newspaper stated tonight that all seven of the Arab states will issue similar proclamations of martial law. The purpose -- to make ready for military operations.

When that deadline comes Friday midnight, the Arab armies will be on the move. <sup>In fact</sup> the troops of trans-Jordan are already pushing into Palestine. Today the Arab legion occupied Jericho.



Across the Jordan and only fourteen miles from Jerusalem we hear that the entire army of King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan is streaming into the Holy Land right now.

(The all-important question is this: will the Moslem forces occupy merely the Arab sections of Palestine? Will they be content with that? Or will they try to invade the Jewish sections -- marked off as the Jewish state?) Those two alternatives may well be the difference between comparative peace or the most ~~violent~~ violent kind of war.

~~Today, Arab leaders in Damascus claimed a victory in a battle that has been raging for days - the battle for the roadblock at Bab-El-Wad, twelve miles west of Jerusalem. That's a dominating point on the highway to Tel Aviv, a Jewish lifeline. The place was ~~stormed~~ <sup>stormed</sup> by the Haganah in violent fighting; but now the Arabs claim to have recaptured Bab-El-Wad. This is answered by a Jewish counter claim -- that Haganah is keeping open the vital highway.~~

## JERUSALEM FOLLOW PALESTINE

The approach of the zero hour for Palestine was signalized today by a huge convoy of motor trucks, pulling out of Jerusalem, rolling along the northern highway to Haifa. This convoy, four blocks long, heading for the coast, there to embark for England - before that zero hour, midnight this Friday.

Their departure from Jerusalem leaves the Holy City in a most precarious condition, chaos is threatening, water supply cut off, and no electricity or fuel. A Jewish official stated today that the Zionist Militia Haganah would seize all strategic buildings in Jerusalem, the ~~same~~ moment the last of the British were out of the city -- when they had completed the evacuation that began with the four-block-long motor convoy today.

MRS VESTER FOR MAYOR

of Jerusalem

At Lake Success today the delegates were working frantically, trying to figure out some eleventh hour solution to the Palestine problem -- some way to keep things quieted down after the British pull out. I talked to our Chief Delegate Warren Austin, a little while ago. ~~Mr~~ He told me that so far they had found no one to play the role of temporary mayor.<sup>TP</sup> So I asked him about Mrs. Vester. He replied that the suggestion might be an inspiration. Bertha Vester is an American woman who has lived in Jerusalem for more than sixty years. I first knew her there in World War One. She undoubtedly is one of the most remarkable women in the world.<sup>TP</sup> Nominally she is head of the ~~so-called~~ so-called American Colony, <sup>a group of</sup> Protestants, <sup>from our mid-west, who</sup> ~~who~~ went to the Holy Land, ~~from the Middle West~~ back in the <sup>Eighties</sup> ~~eighties~~, when Bertha Vester was a small child. <sup>The</sup> ~~Her~~ family name was Spofford. Her father a Chicago lawyer. Today the Colony ~~and~~ devotes itself almost entirely to social service. Mrs. Vester is the head of it, and you might call her a modern Florence Nightingale.

She ~~has~~ lived there during <sup>many years of</sup> the Turkish ~~rule,~~ <sup>rule,</sup> through two world wars, and the period ~~in~~ between. She is well ~~am~~ known to all the leaders, both Jews <sup>— the British too —</sup> and Arabs, and, to the heads of all the various religious sects -- greatly admired and respected by all, ~~of them~~ because of her ~~in~~ lifelong devotion to the care of women and children of the Holy City.

At the present moment ~~maxim~~ she is wearing a Red Cross uniform in Jerusalem, still on errands of mercy, <sup>— as</sup> ~~and~~ she always has been.

~~She is~~ a woman of great administrative ability, poise, <sup>and</sup> a forceful speaker, <sup>surely she would</sup> ~~and it seems to me~~ <sup>be</sup> the ideal <sup>for</sup> ~~person~~ <sup>being to play</sup> the leading role in the Holy City in this <sup>time</sup> of chaos, when almost no one trusts anyone else, and every man's hand is raised against his brother.. <sup>TP</sup> Although she is <sup>no longer</sup> ~~seventy years~~

<sup>ing,</sup> ~~and~~ she seems <sup>ed</sup> as vigorous and capable as ever the last time I saw her, <sup>less than a year ago.</sup> <sup>To be made Mayor of Jerusalem</sup> ~~It~~ would be a fitting climax to her life ~~time~~ of service, the ~~long~~ years she has devoted to the sick and the poor in

~~in Jerusalem~~ The Holy City.

## WILHEMINA

This earth is going to lose one of its few remaining sovereigns (Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, who today announced that she is going to ~~at~~ abdicate. The aged Queen is in ill health,) and some months ago she went into retirement - naming her daughter, Crown Princess Juliana, as Regent. <sup>R</sup> She returned to public life again, but, several days ago she named the Crown Princess as Regent for the second time. Now Wilhelmina will make all this final - by abdicating her throne in <sup>favor</sup> ~~xxxx~~ of her daughter. This she announced today - her many years and poor health no longer permitting her to exercise the duties of royalty. <sup>R</sup> *Her proclamation referred to her "advancing"* (the Netherlands will have a new sovereign - Juliana, who will take her mother's place as the world's only ruling Queen.)

The tiny principality of Luxembourg has a woman sovereign, but she has only the rank of Grand Duchess. Juliana will reign over a small country with a huge colonial empire - reminding <sup>us</sup> ~~one~~ of the woman rulers of the past, Elizabeth, Catherine of Russia, Victoria.

years and "with tiredness"

## MATT HENSON

Here's a story that might be called: "better late than never." It's about Matt Henson, Number One Negro explorer; the man who stood at the North Pole with Robert E. Peary. -- Co-discoverer of the North Pole.

Matt Henson who is now eight-one years old has just <sup>been</sup> made an honorary member of the Explorers Club, the fortieth ever to be given this ~~top~~ distinction.

A fascinating, intimate story of this extraordinary negro, Matt Henson, came out recently, ~~is~~ a book <sup>called</sup> ~~called~~ Dark Companion, by Bradley Robinson. There are few more absorbingly interesting biographies of Americans, than this tale of the great negro Arctic explorer.

## TICKET

All you automobile drivers know how annoying it is to get a ticket - when the cop stops you, sternly refuses explanations, and writes out the unpleasant summons; so you'll sympathize with Evelyn Bertucci, a Hollywood meg actress who appears in the movies under the much more glamorous name of -- Smith, Evelyn Smith. Today she drove through a red light, and an officer waved her over to the curb. Miss Smith glared at him, and said: "If you give me a ticket, I'll kill myself.

Now, nothing like that ever intimidated a traffic cop. So in response, the officer in Hollywood pulled out the ominous little book, and wrote out a ticket. With the usual glum face, he handed the summons to actress Miss Smith who put it in her handbag - and, as she did so, she drew out a knife. It was a strange exotic sort of blade, a Chinese ceremonial knife.

With this she stabbed herself. Apparently she was trying to carry out her threat to kill herself; but, she stabbed herself not in the heart -- in the hip.

A section of the anatomy that has areas where a stab is not necessarily fatal.

However, it was all startling enough, and the astounded officer made haste to get the lady to a hospital. There she was patched up a bit, and sent home with the traffic ticket still in her handbag. If Miss Smith of Hollywood stabbed <sup>herself</sup> ~~herself~~ in the hip upon getting the ticket, what will she do when the Judge

says: <sup>^</sup> "You are fined!" <sup>^</sup> ~~Five~~ "Five dollars please!"

Now Nelson - something from you please!