

# Globe-Trotter Harriman Is Still Going Strong

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In the dark of last Wednesday evening William Averell Harriman, who will be 75 next Nov. 15, ran down the ramp from his presidential jet at Andrews Air Force Base in nearby Maryland. It was the end of yet another talking trip.

Harriman has been talking straight talk to Presidents, Prime Ministers, dictators, and other assorted political potentates since Harry Hopkins introduced him to the Roosevelt inner circle in early New Deal days.

For 22 days he zigzagged around the world as one of President Johnson's peace offensive envoys. Mr. Johnson put a lot of people into diplomatic orbit but somehow the memory fades of all but the extraordinarily durable Harriman.

For Harriman the only word is extraordinary. On this 35,000-mile trip he touched down in 12 world capitals—he was in Bangkok three times—and none of them was new to him. Not only had he been to them all before but he had met every one of the leaders before with the single exception of Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser.

## Greeted by Menzies

That wealth of experience clearly paid dividends. Australia's Robert Menzies, who came out to the airport in the late evening to greet him, was an old friend from World War II days in London when the Aussie sat with the British War Cabinet.

Or take Yugoslavia's President Tito.

"I saw him in Brdo"—where they met again this time—"back in 1951 when Yugoslavia, after the break with Russia, feared Stalin would turn the

satellites loose on him. We gave him planes and tanks."

Harriman paused and added: "When you've seen a man in his tough times, there's a certain relationship."

In Warsaw, Communist Party boss Wladislaw Gomulka saw Harriman "for old time's sake." He once had been a house guest in Harriman's New York residence, years after they first met during the war.

"The Shah of Iran," says Harriman, "considers me one of his oldest friends. He stayed at my cottage in Sun Valley." Harriman, whose father created the Union Pacific Railroad, was of course the man who created that ski resort.

Harriman has a newspaperman's instincts about travel and he hasn't missed many corners of the world.

"If you haven't been to a country," as he puts it, "no matter how much information you have, you can't get a feel of it."

In fact Harriman feels so strongly about the right of Americans to travel that he once hired Dean Acheson to fight a potential case for him right up to the Supreme Court. Back in the Eisenhower years, when he had finished a term as Governor of New York (he was involuntarily retired by the voters in favor of Nelson Rockefeller) Harriman decided he wanted to go to Communist China.

1959 Trip Called Off

At that time the State Department forbade such trips. But the test case never came off because at the last minute he received a message from Peking saying it would not be convenient to receive him that year, 1959.

Of course, Harriman has been to China. He stopped off in Chungking, the wartime

capital, to see Chiang Kai-shek en route home from Moscow in 1946. Everybody told him he ought to go on to Peking but he had a date with General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo, and so he missed his only chance to get the feel of today's center of the Asian Communist world.

"I was very serious in those days," he says with a sense of regret that he didn't put off the visit with the General another day or two to take in Peking.

The Governor—everybody calls him that and he loves it despite the fact that his political skills turned out to be an almost totally inverse ratio to his diplomatic abilities—had only eight hours warning of his latest trip. President Johnson called him at noon and he was airborne from Andrews at 8 p.m.

## Prepared to Take Off

But The Governor was not unprepared this time even though he thought it was to be a trip of only a few days.

"I've been caught several times before," he explains, "on being sent to the tropics. So I usually take some tropical shirts along. I only wear one weight of wool suit anyway."

Although the presidential jet, with its huge "United States of America" legend emblazoned on each side, has a pair of bunks, the six-foot-one Harriman spent only three or four nights aboard in bed. At each stop, too, embassy wives reached for the soiled shirts and returned them in time for The Governor and his two globe-girdling aides, Asian Communist expert Davis Dean and Christopher Squire who is in charge of Hungarian affairs at State.

Harriman took no secretary. He penciled his dispatches on a yellow pad and got them off at the next stop. Dean and Squire alternated as note tak-

ers at the talks with the foreign leaders and then wrote up the detailed reports.

Harriman has his own philosophy about diplomatic messages.

"I write them short to the President and the Secretary of State. More people read the short ones. But I make them very much to the point. They have got to be reasonably entertaining. I learned that from the British. They pass around the Cabinet table the telegrams they get from their ambassadors. They never have a leak, either; I wish we could do as well.

"The ambassador in Britain who writes the best has his career made. They have literary style. Sometimes exact reporting is not as important as being descriptive."

Harriman, of course, won't discuss the substance of his peace mission other than to say that "I got the impression that all the people I saw were anxious to see the fighting stop, although for differing reasons."

The "crocodile" method is to come to the point and wrap it up quickly. He had 45 minutes at the Peshawar airport with Pakistan's President Ayub Khan who, naturally, he has known since 1959.

## In Warsaw at 3:30 a.m.

When he arrived in Warsaw, nonstop from Andrews, it was 3:30 in the morning by his wristwatch. But 45 minutes after the touchdown he was closeted with Poland's Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki.

"You can do an awful lot in an hour," he says.

Harriman, of course, was acutely conscious of the critical role of the Sino-Soviet dispute plays in the war in Vietnam. Like other Administration leaders, he feels that Moscow wants to see the war ended, that Peking wants to

see it continue and that Hanoi is trapped in between the two Communist giants.

It was Harriman, after the German surrender and before Japan fell, who inspired James Forrestal to write in his 1945 diary: "He said the outward thrust of communism was not dead and that we might well have to face an ideological warfare just as vigorous and dangerous as Fascism or Nazism." And that at a time when most Americans were putting their postwar hopes on a continuation of the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union.

Stalin himself confirmed Harriman's dire views that October when he told him that "we've decided to go our own way."

It was President Kennedy who first deeply involved Harriman in the Far East, especially in the China problem. Today he takes very seriously the hard words from Peking such as Lin Biao's pronouncement that the underdeveloped nations of the "countryside"

will surround and defeat the "cities" of North America and Western Europe.

He wants Americans to fully appreciate the danger from China. But he does not worry that in turning their eyes to the Far East they will be bemused into thinking that Washington and Moscow are about to become allies. He figures the Russians will make it evident it can't come to that.

Averell Harriman did not bring peace to Vietnam but

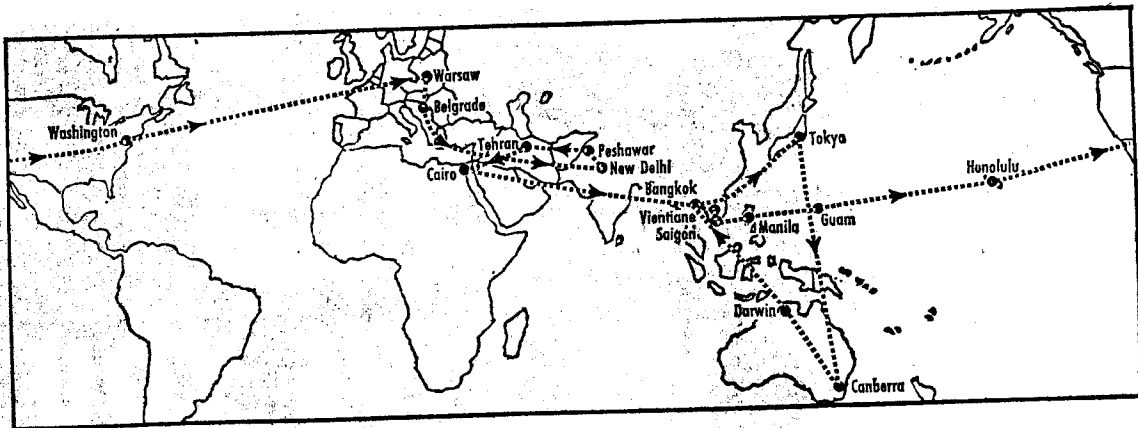
he clearly enjoys the satisfaction of yet another job well done. The trip was tiring; a cold turned into an ear infection because of too rapid descent and change in the cabin air pressure coming into Darwin, Australia.

Winging home across the Pacific, he played bridge with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Sen. John Sherman Cooper, Dean Squires and Rusk's aide, C. Arthur (Buck) Borg. Rusk, who had joined up in New Delhi and who lives on his earnings, picked up a bit of

change from Harriman who in 1952 was reputed to be worth \$40 million.

When they got to Honolulu and the luxury of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Harriman ducked into a sports shop, bought a \$8.95 pair of wildly yellow swimming trunks and headed into the sea at Walkiki.

There was no surf boarding this time. But he mused to a companion: "In my day, it was much more dangerous; they didn't have that stabilizing fin on the back of the board then."



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**MISSION**—Broken lines trace the route of W. Averell Harriman on his presidential truce mission.