

Insight and Outlook *Post 9/23/66*

By Joseph Kraft

The Changes at State

THE PRELIMINARY verdict on the reshuffle at the State Department has to be that it is another victory for Dean Rusk over the spirit of change.

But it could have been — indeed, it nearly was — much worse. And there are some hopeful long-term possibilities.

To be sure, the Secretary of State is now more firmly entrenched and more solidly confirmed in his views than ever. Lack of stature or lack of experience disqualifies all three of the new men coming in close to the top from soon posing any serious challenge to the Ruskian outlook.

The more so as the three are either advocates of present lines of policy or unpositioned. Not one has any special rapport with the Third World of underdeveloped and neutralist countries that the Secretary of State so blithely ignores. Not one is yet ready to take the place of "devil's advocate" on Vietnam that George Ball, the retiring Under Secretary, filled with such conviction. For the time being, the voice of heresy, small as it may have been, has been silenced.

KATZENBACH, the former Attorney General who now takes Ball's place, is the unpositioned man par excellence. Though a scholar of international law and a principal draftsman of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, he has rarely voiced foreign policy views, either publicly or privately, over the past few years.

There are reasons, including a particularly warm friendship with Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, to believe that Katzenbach has some doubts about present policies. But there are even more reasons to believe that he will be careful and deliberate about advancing these doubts.

For one thing, Katzenbach will almost certainly be expected at the outset to play

a major role with respect to the liberal Senate critics of Administration foreign policy. In particular, he will probably be thrown into the breach to spike the guns of his close friend and former associate, Senator Robert Kennedy.

By contrast, Eugene Rostow, who succeeds Thomas Mann as Number Three in the Department, and Foy Kohler who takes over from U. Alexis Johnson as Number Four, are known quantities. Mr. Rostow, in a number of recent writings, has expressed himself as a vehement hawk on Vietnam, and a convinced Atlanticist. Mr. Kohler is the very model of a modern foreign service officer, very good, and very, very grey.

SET AGAINST all this, there are the many possibilities who did not get tapped. That negative gain appears to be considerable. Until the very last minute, in fact, it looked as though the Number Two job would be filled by a blowhard Republican lawyer from New York.

Moreover, the new men undoubtedly bring in some fresh qualities—particularly when set against the men they replace. Thus where Alexis Johnson, a former Deputy Ambassador to Saigon, tended to measure everything by its impact on the government of South Vietnam, Foy Kohler, as retiring Ambassador to Russia, is apt to take into consideration what the Russians are doing, or likely to do.

Where Thomas Mann was, however wrongly, thought to be a Yankee imperialist serving the big companies, Mr. Rostow is the author of a highly critical analysis of the oil industry. He also, unlike Mr. Ball, seems to believe that it is possible to do business with General de Gaulle—a quaint conceit in my opinion, but certainly a view that deserves a hearing at high levels.

LASTLY, there is Katzenbach's uncanny capacity for working creatively within the confines of a given system. It is largely thanks to this gift that the approach of the Justice Department to

crime and antitrust problems is undergoing substantial change; that the 1964 and 1965 civil rights bills went through so smoothly and that the 1966 bill went as far as it did; that the General Aniline case was disposed of after years of sterile debate; and that a way was found between advocates of private and public ownership to establish the Communications Satellite Corporation as a publicly owned private institution.

If there is anybody who can work on the inside under Secretary Rusk to identify new tracks to peace, to modernize outworn policies, to end State's paralyzing fear of the Congress, and to put to work the abundant store of unused talent in the Department, that man is Katzenbach. To me anyhow, he seems under the circumstances, the best man the President could have found for the job.

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