

Post 1/16/71
Let

Mr. Service's Case

Columnists such as Garry Wills, examining evidence of latter-day McCarthyism, would do well to consider last year's publication, by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, of "The Amerasia Papers, A Clue to the Catastrophe of China." The editor, Dr. Anthony Kubek, attempted to blame the "catastrophe" on the reporting and influence of Foreign Service officers attached to the Chungking Embassy during World War II.

John S. Service, who was singled out by Kubek for special vilification, has now at last broken silence, in a publication of the University of California's Center for Chinese Studies, entitled "The Amerasia Papers: Some Problems in the History of U.S.-China Relations."

This is not simply a personal rebuttal and defense by Service against charges which have been dismissed by a 20-0 grand jury vote, by a committee of the Congress, and by successive reviews and decisions of the State Department's Loyalty Security Board. After the department nevertheless dismissed him, yielding to strong outside pressure, the Supreme Court eventually and by unanimous vote ordered his reinstatement, and his security status was later restored after a further examination by the Loyalty Security Board. Few victims of McCarthyism have been so thoroughly vindicated.

Instead, this book is a scholarly contribution of the answer of the historian's question: just what was our wartime policy toward China? There is no question that by the end of the war that policy had become, largely by default and under the influence of the embittered General Hurley, one of almost unqualified support for Chiang Kai-shek. But Service has made a convincing case, on the basis of documentation now published in the department's Foreign Relations series, that until well into 1945 it had been the policy of the department and the President that we should qualify our support and work for the unity of all forces in China engaged in the fight against Japan. In keeping with that policy, Hurley himself had worked, ineptly and unsuccessfully, to bring about a Kuomintang-Communist coalition. If any individuals are to blame for the abandonment of our traditional China policy, and for the tragic consequences that followed, it was not the decimated corps of China experts in our Foreign Service.

In 25 years of service, though never in China, I have never known a colleague equal to Jack Service for judgment, capability and devotion. At a time when some Americans still confuse U.S. interests with the fortunes of particular leaders abroad, the scholarly contribution to the history of our relations with China deserves a wide readership.

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