

LBJ Can Afford to Trust Soviet

By Drew Pearson

President Johnson was entertaining Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate at breakfast to give them a first-hand report on his "away from the brink" in curtailing nuclear materials.



Pearson

The breakfast opened with a little ribbing of GOP Leader Charlie Halleck.

"Charlie," said Mr. Johnson, "you complained about that thick Texas bacon we've served you in the past. I want you to know that I instructed the cook to prepare thin-cut Yankee bacon especially for Charlie Halleck."

Most of the breakfast, however, was a serious though optimistic report by the President on how he had worked out the historic joint move with Khrushchev to cut back on plutonium.

He explained that he had taken it up with Khrushchev both in an exchange of letters and also through American representatives at the Geneva disarmament talks. He also discussed it with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin.

But, revealed Mr. Johnson, he had no definite commitment that Khrushchev would go along until about 10 minutes before he made his New York speech to the Associated Press.

"How do we know the Rus-

sians will live up to the agreement?" asked Rep. Les Arends of Illinois, the Republican whip.

Johnson replied that he didn't know; there was no way to be sure, though he felt hopeful that the Russians would. But it doesn't matter, he added, for U.S. security needs are fully met despite the cutback. The President then made the dramatic statement that the United States has 10 times its needs in fissionable materials.

He added: "We are not going to use nuclear energy as a WPA project."

Republican leaders on the whole seemed satisfied.

Responsibility

"When a man becomes President of the United States," remarked a presidential adviser the other day, "and when he, merely by picking up the telephone, can start a world catastrophe, it gives him a new and profound sense of responsibility."

"With each of the two Presidents under whom I have served — Kennedy and Johnson," said the adviser, "this has caused them to start taking constructive steps to get away from the brink."

This is what Mr. Johnson has been doing almost from the week after he assumed office. He has had, however, some minor opposition. One week after President Kennedy's death, Mr. Johnson proposed writing a letter to Khrushchev thanking him for his unprecedented action in sending him Russia's confidential file on Lee Oswald.

The State Department advised against the reply, but the new President wrote it anyway, though the State Department managed to extract some of its warmth before the letter finally was sent.

Again, when Mr. Johnson's recent AP speech was drafted, State Department advisers tucked in one paragraph which spoiled part of the Johnson gesture toward winning better relations with Russia. It also prevented the speech from being published in the Soviet.

That paragraph read:

"The Communists, using force and intrigue, seek to bring about a Communist-dominated world. Our convictions, our interests, our life as a nation, demand we resolutely oppose that effort. This activity and this alone is the cause of the cold war between us."

Wasn't in Pravda

This paragraph, alluding to the spread of communism by force, was just what the Russians have been battling the Chinese about. The Chinese have claimed that communism must be spread by force and revolution. Khrushchev has claimed nuclear war is too catastrophic to ride and the original war doctrine of Marx must be revised.

For this the Chinese have called Khrushchev a "revisionist," the worst name in the Communist lexicon, and even worse than calling K a "Bible-reading buffoon, an unrequited lover of the West who made himself a laughing stock

by being soft on imperialism," which the Chinese also called him.

The State Department, obviously afraid Mr. Johnson would be called "soft on communism," inserted the above paragraph in the AP speech, even though it put the United States in the position of not believing Khrushchev in his battle with the Chinese over spreading communism by force.

As a result, word from the Kremlin is that full publication of the Johnson speech was seriously debated, finally turned down because of this one paragraph.

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3d Man Arrested In Nazi's Escape

BRAUN SCHWEIG, Germany, April 26 (UPI)—Authorities today announced the arrest of a third suspect in connection with the escape of convicted war criminal Hans Walter Zech-Zenntwich.

Braunschweig prosecutor Heinrich Kintzi identified the arrested man as Werner Plaetzer, 37, but declined to discuss the role he played in allegedly helping Zech-Zenntwich escape from a maximum security prison here last Thursday. A guard and another prisoner are also under arrest.

Zech-Zenntwich, 47, was convicted three days earlier of assisting in the massacre of more than 5000 Russian Jews in a Nazi SS camp at Pinsk during World War II.