

P  
R  
O  
F  
I  
L  
E  
S

FORESIGHT, NIGHTMARE, AND HINDSIGHT

“Both before and after his banishment from responsible governmental affairs, Service talked extensively with the highest Communist Chinese leaders, and during the Second World War he was one of a very few American diplomats whom Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai knew well. The fact that this man, whom the future rulers of Peking grew to like and trust, was quiet, dignified, candid, compassionate, and that he represented the very best in America, could have been most helpful to our country.”

“Among some of the crueller jabs at Service, in his years of limbo, was the allegation that he was somehow personally responsible for the deaths of American boys in the Korean war. The fact is that if he had been listened to, and the United States had taken a realistic view of China and its Communists, there might not have *been* any Korean war.”





*John Service*

“Meanwhile, Stilwell’s successor, General Wedemeyer, passed through Tokyo on his way home for consultation. He had a cordial chat with Service, in which he said that Service was being recommended for a medal awarded to civilians for exemplary work during the war. In Washington, Service later heard, Wedemeyer saw J. Edgar Hoover, and afterward there were no more cordial meetings and no further talk of a medal.”

“As another friend of Service’s has remarked, few men have been so mightily defamed by nasty people and so meagrely defended by nice ones.”

“The rendezvous was arranged with typical Kissinger furtiveness, but nothing much came of it; Kissinger, unlike most senior members of the United States Senate, didn’t seem to be aware that Service had ever met Mao.”

From a Profile of John Service,  
ex-Foreign Service officer and  
political casualty,  
by E. J. Kahn, Jr.  
Appearing this week in  
The New Yorker.  
Yes, The New Yorker.