

FROM THE BELL SYNDICATE, INC.--RELEASE SUNDAY, DEC. 29, 1957.

DREW PEARSON

ON

THE WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

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DREW PEARSON SAYS; (CAPS) COMMANDING U.S. AIR BASE IN AFRICA  
REQUIRES DIPLOMATIC SKILL; KING'S DAUGHTER URGES MOROCCAN WOMEN  
TO LAY ASIDE THE VEIL; MARINES STILL REMEMBERED ON SHORES OF TRIPOLI.

(END CAPS)

EN ROUTE THROUGH NORTH AFRICA.--OPERATING AN AMERICAN BASE ON THE  
EDGE OF THE SAHARA DESERT 4,000 MILES FROM THE U.S.A. IN NEW ARAB  
NATIONS, JEALOUS OF THEIR SOVEREIGNTY, IS NOT A MERE MATTER OF  
REPAIRING AND FLYING AIRPLANES.

IT'S A JOB FOR A MAN WHO CAN KEEP AMERICAN TROOPS OUT OF TROUBLE,  
KEEP THEM FROM GETTING HOMESICK, KEEP A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE  
FRENCH AND THE MOROCCANS, OR THE ITALIANS AND THE LIBYANS, AND AT  
THE SAME TIME KEEP ALERT FOR POSSIBLE "PEARL HARBORS" FROM MOSCOW.

FROM MY OBSERVATION, WE HAVE SOME EXCELLENT MEN OPERATING THESE  
AMERICAN CITIES ON THE EDGE OF THE SAHARA. TO CALL THEM CITIES IS  
NO EXAGGERATION. NOUASSEUR, THE BIG BOMBER SUPPLY BASE, COVERS 7,000  
ACRES AND IS 17 MILES AROUND. SIDI SLIMANE, THE B-47 BASE, IS OVER  
8,000 ACRES. THEY HAVE THEIR OWN WATER SYSTEMS, SEWAGE, ELECTRIC  
LIGHTS, FIRE DEPARTMENTS, AND EACH EMPLOYS AROUND 5,000 NATIVE  
LABORERS. AT NOUASSEUR, JUST OUTSIDE CASABLANCA, THIS LABOR IS CHIEFLY  
MOROCCAN; SECOND, ARAB-SPEAKING JEWS; THIRD, FRENCH.

THE TOP COMMANDER OF THIS AMERICAN OASIS NEAR THE SAHARA IS BRIG.  
GEN. LEWIS MUNDELL, FORMERLY OF COLORADO SPRINGS; HIS BASE COMMANDER  
IS COL. SAM SMITH OF BUTLER, PA. BOTH HAVE DEDICATED THEIR LIVES  
TO THE AIR FORCE, COLONEL SMITH HAVING SPENT 10 YEARS AS A NON-  
COMMISSIONED OFFICER. THEY MAKE A FINE TEAM.

--OPERATION GLAD-HAND--

TO GET TOP LOYALTY FROM LOCAL MOROCCAN LABOR AND TOP EFFICIENCY  
FROM IMPORTED AMERICAN PERSONNEL, A SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAM HAS BEEN  
ESTABLISHED UNDER CHARLES T. BRIER OF SACRAMENTO. NEW WORKERS FROM  
THE U.S.A. ARE MET AT THE PLANE IN THE FIRST STEP OF "OPERATION GLAD-  
HAND," AND AN OLDER EMPLOYEE IS ASSIGNED TO TAKE EACH IN TOW UNTIL HE  
GETS SETTLED. LOCAL MOROCCAN AND FRENCH-SPEAKING WORKERS GET SPECIAL  
COURSES IN ENGLISH, AND ALL NEWLY ARRIVED PERSONNEL ARE REQUIRED TO  
ATTEND LECTURES ON SAFETY. IN ADDITION, ALL AIRMEN UNDER 25 ARE  
REQUIRED TO TAKE A "COMPULSORY DRIVER IMPROVEMENT COURSE" EVERY SAT-  
URDAY FOR THREE WEEKS--A TOTAL OF 10 HOURS DRIVER-TRAINING.

MORE

REASONS: THE WORST TROUBLE-BREEDER AROUND ANY AMERICAN BASE IS AUTO ACCIDENTS. HOMICIDES FROM AUTOMOBILES HAVE STIRRED UP MORE ANTI-AMERICANISM ABROAD THAN ANY INCIDENT SHORT OF THE GIRARD CASE. SO FAR THIS YEAR, HOWEVER, NOT A SINGLE AMERICAN HAS GONE TO JAIL IN MOROCCO--A PHENOMENAL RECORD.

--NORTH AFRICAN BASEBALL--

PART OF THE SECRET OF SMOOTH RELATIONS BETWEEN AMERICAN BASES AND LOCAL POPULATIONS IS KEEPING AMERICAN GI'S OFF THE CITY STREETS. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED LARGELY BY AN INTENSIVE SPORTS PROGRAM, HOBBY SHOPS, PHOTO LABS, MACHINE REPAIR SHOPS, AND EDUCATIONAL COURSES, WHEREBY A MAN CAN GET A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA UNDER THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES INSTITUTE OR A COLLEGE DEGREE UNDER THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND.

AT NOUASSEUR, MRS. GRACIE KINNOMEN OF WINDSOR, MO., EDUCATION ADVISER, IS THE KIND OF GIRL WHOM YOU SEE BUTTONHOLING A GI IN FRONT OF BARRACKS, REMINDING HIM THAT HE'S JUST FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL AND HE MUST SIGN UP FOR THAT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COURSE AND GET A COLLEGE DEGREE. AS A RESULT OF HER EFFORTS, NOUASSEUR RANKED FIRST THIS FALL IN USAFI ENROLLMENTS.

AT WHEELUS FIELD, LIBYA, LT. COL. JOHN S. GIEGEL OF AKRON AND MAJ. JOHN W. MURPHY OF MEMPHIS DIRECT SUCH AN INTENSIVE SPORTS PROGRAM THAT 27 BASKETBALL TEAMS ARE IN OPERATION, PLUS TOUCH-FOOTBALL, TENNIS, FOOTBALL, SWIMMING TEAMS, AND SOCCER, PLAYED BY LOCAL MOROCCANS WORKING ON THE BASE. SIMILAR SPORTS PROGRAMS ARE CONDUCTED IN THE REST OF NORTH AFRICA.

IT'S A LONG 1,200-MILE HOP ACROSS THE DESERTS OF NORTH AFRICA BETWEEN MOROCCO AND LIBYA, BUT COMPETITION IS SO KEEN BETWEEN THE 316TH AIR DIVISION IN MOROCCO AND WHEELUS AIRMEN IN TRIPOLI THAT THE 316TH'S BASEBALL, SOFTBALL, VOLLEY BALL, AND TRACK TEAMS WHICH RECENTLY "GOT TOOK" IN WHEELUS ARE NOW DEMANDING RETURN ENGAGEMENTS.

THUS DO AMERICAN AIRMEN, ON GUARD ON THE PERIMETER NEAREST MOSCOW, TRANSPOSE PARTS OF AMERICA TO A LAND OF SAND AND PALM TREES, VEILED WOMEN AND HAREMS, CAMELS AND CADILLACS.

MORE

--MOROCCAN WOMEN REVOLT--

PRINCESS LALLA AICHA, ELDEST DAUGHTER OF KING MOHAMED V, HAS STARTED A CAMPAIGN TO EMANCIPATE MOSLEM WOMEN IN MOROCCO, WHO TODAY ARE AMONG THE MOST BACKWARD IN ASIA OR AFRICA.

MOSLEM WOMEN IN TURKEY PUT ASIDE THEIR VEILS 30 YEARS AGO UNDER THE REFORMS OF KEMAL ATATURK, AND HAVE NOW EVEN BEEN ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT. THE WOMEN OF LEBANON AND SOME OF THE OTHER NEAR EAST COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO STARTED THEIR CLIMB OUT OF DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

BUT AS YOU GO ALONG THE STREETS OF MOROCCO AND LIBYA YOU SEE WOMEN PEERING GUARDEDLY FROM BEHIND VEILS WHICH PUSH THEIR NOSES TO ONE SIDE, AND, THOUGH YOU NEVER SEE THEM, MANY ARE CONFINED TO THEIR HOMES, FORBIDDEN TO GO BEYOND THEIR GARDENS.

PRINCESS AICHA, HOWEVER, HAS GONE ON THE RADIO, URGING MOROCCAN WOMEN TO REVOLT. APPARENTLY SHE IS GETTING RESULTS.

WHEN JOY HODGES, OUR MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES, TRIED TO TAKE A PICTURE OF THE MOSLEM LADY WHO TIDIED UP THE WOMEN'S QUARTERS AT THE U.S. AIR FORCE BASE AT NOUASSEUR, SHE PUT HER VEIL ASIDE. MISS HODGES, WHO WANTED A PICTURESQUE POSE, MOTIONED FOR HER TO PUT THE VEIL BACK.

"LALLA AICHA SAYS NO," SAID THE MOSLEM WOMAN IN BROKEN ENGLISH. "VEIL NOT GOOD. WE BE LIKE YOU."

--FDR & KING MOHAMED--

IN CASABLANCA, THE LATE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT IS STILL THE MOST REVERED OF ALL AMERICANS. HE IS REMEMBERED NOT MERELY BECAUSE HE FLEW HERE FOR THE "CASABLANCA CONFERENCE" WITH WINSTON CHURCHILL, GENERAL GIRAUD, AND GENERAL DE GAULLE, BUT BECAUSE HE WAS SHREWD ENOUGH TO INVITE THE SULTAN OF MOROCCO FOR LUNCH.

THE SULTAN, NOW KING MOHAMED V, WAS THEN A POWERLESS, UNWILLING PUPPET OF THE FRENCH. ROOSEVELT TOOK A CHANCE ON AFFRONTING THE FRENCH BY INVITING HIM TO LUNCH--WITH CHURCHILL.

AT LUNCHEON HE TOLD THE SULTAN WHAT A FINE COUNTRY HE HAD, WHICH BROUGHT THE REPLY THAT IT COULD BE A FINE COUNTRY IF ONLY WAYS COULD BE FOUND TO DEVELOP IT. ROOSEVELT REPLIED THAT AFTER THE WAR HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A HUNDRED YOUNG MOROCCANS STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES, TRAIN THEM FOR FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF THEIR LAND.

CHURCHILL LISTENED, SCOWLING. ON ANOTHER OCCASION HE TOLD ROOSEVELT THAT HE WAS NOT MADE PRIME MINISTER TO LIQUIDATE THE BRITISH EMPIRE. ON THIS OCCASION HE DIDN'T LIKE TO HEAR PLANS FOR LIQUIDATING THE FRENCH EMPIRE EITHER. IN A HUFF, HE FINALLY LEFT THE TABLE.

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BUT THE SULTAN, NOW KING OF MOROCCO, NEVER FORGOT ROOSEVELT'S INTEREST. THAT IS ONE REASON AMERICAN AIR BASES ARE PERMITTED TO REMAIN IN MOROCCO TODAY.

NOTE--ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO CONTINUE AMERICAN-MOROCCAN GOOD WILL WOULD BE TO HAVE THE GIANT AIRPLANE CARRIER, USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, PAY A GOOD-WILL VISIT TO RABAT, INVITE THE KING ABOARD TO WATCH THE AMAZING PRECISION TAKEOFFS OF ITS JET FIGHTERS.

(END MERRY-GO-ROUND RELEASE SUNDAY, DEC. 29, 1957)

MM 12/24/57