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March 7, 1964

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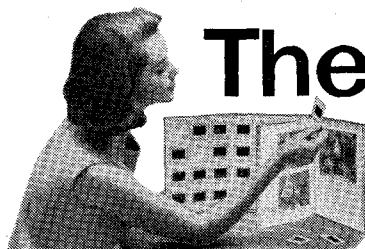
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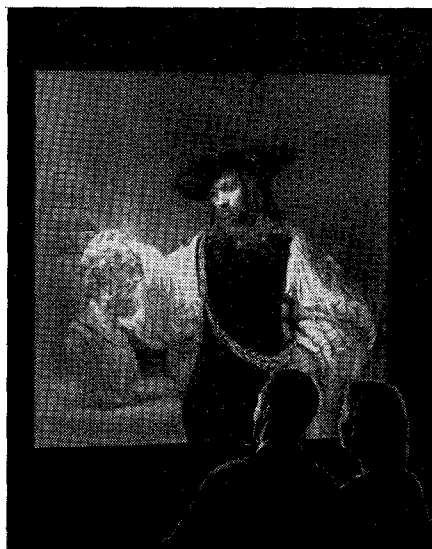


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"Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer"

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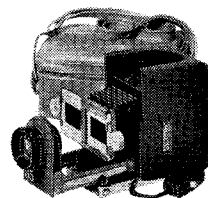
thority. (The slide-and-commentary method of instruction is itself widely used in leading museums and universities.)

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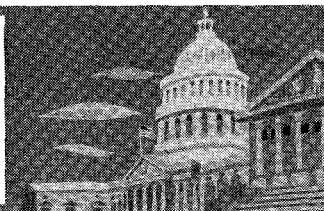
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State of Affairs



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Henry Brandon, for fourteen years United States correspondent for the Sunday Times of London, will regularly contribute to SR from Washington and elsewhere.*

PRESIDENT KENNEDY used to say that "you can always survive a mistake in domestic affairs but you may get killed by one made in foreign policy," and that no doubt was one of the reasons why shortly after he came into the White House he began to place increasingly heavy emphasis on foreign affairs.

President Johnson's task in having to grasp the reins of the Presidency overnight was made a little easier because international affairs at the time somehow gave him a brief respite that he used with extraordinary skill to establish himself as an effective leader at home. In a breathtaking manner he took hold of the Presidency and asserted his authority. Like a dashing suitor he turned Congress's head and created a sense of camaraderie with the legislature that even if it cannot last, nevertheless ought to stand him in good stead.

It would be too soon to expect him to establish the same kind of authority over the conduct of foreign affairs—for which he does not have the inborn instinct that he has for national politics. He is guided by certain broad, sweeping ideas but is uninterested in the details that made President Kennedy both desk officer and policy-maker.

The late President used his wise, patient, and self-effacing Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, as his chief negotiator. The conduct of foreign affairs, however, and especially all major initiatives, the President kept in his own hands. The man who helped him in this perhaps more than any other was the brilliant, pragmatic activist McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. There was something of a Becket relationship between the two, though there was never any doubt that he was only the chancellor, not the archbishop.

President Johnson, too, will keep control of foreign policy—no President can escape this task—but his preference is probably to leave as much as possible of its operation to those assigned to the task. This will require certain

adjustments on both the directing and working levels of the State Department. In Mr. Kennedy's days every desk officer felt that the President was looking over his shoulder, but it also meant that everybody waited for the small brain trust headed by the President to develop ideas and decide on initiatives. Now the State Department faces a new situation and an opportunity to assume its traditional role as guardian and initiator of foreign policy. This above all is a test for Mr. Rusk, for while in domestic matters the President has no peer—he simply gives orders by following his own mind and instincts—in foreign policy he will for some time be choosing from various alternatives submitted to him. An interest in events for their own sake from a national as well as an international viewpoint comes only gradually, as it did with President Kennedy.

AT his first formal press conference Mr. Johnson held his own on domestic matters but created some confusion over foreign policy. And if he is loath to expose himself to the kind of set press conferences with "specialists" present who tend to ask informed, long-range policy questions, in contrast with White House regulars who are more interested in the spot news story, then it will be necessary for the Secretary of State to fill the void.

The President has gone to great length to see large numbers of reporters individually or in groups, but these chats and dips in the White House swimming pool provide more of an insight into his heart than into his policy concepts. The country and the world

have become accustomed to getting guidance about American policy via the press conference. And not the smallest reason for filling this vacuum, of course, is the ego of the press corps, which is not insensitive to the fact that its absence from the spotlight lessens its importance as the *vox populi*. One way to meet the situation would be for the Secretary of State to hold more frequent meetings with the press; another, to submit questions to the President in advance, at least on foreign policy. The purpose of a press conference is not, after all, to prove the verbal agility of the President, but to become enlightened—especially at a time when the U.S. is being buffeted by several crises: the dispute with Panama, which in itself is not a serious affair except for the effect it is having on the rest of Latin America; the ugly question, which may need to be answered before the elections, of whether the United States should involve itself more deeply in combat in South Vietnam; the problem of the fading unity in NATO and the breaking up of the wall of containment around Communist China. Foreign policy problems are much like flowers in a garden. They need constant attention, and occasional pruning; and however much President Johnson has promised to tend the Kennedy garden, he will need to do some fresh planting.

Kennedy had an extraordinary sense for the unfolding of history. He felt that he knew the kind of standard of excellence Americans want to achieve, and he felt that he was the man to achieve it. In the process he could take certain risks. Johnson sees himself much more as representing the consensus of what Americans want here and now—which does not mean that he is seeking the lowest common denominator; he is merely anxious not to put too great a strain on the American system.

He is doing brilliantly in promoting his domestic program, but in the end it will be what he is able to do in foreign policy that will determine his standing in the country and in the world.

—HENRY BRANDON.

On the Magnanimity of God

By Kathleen Knudsen

A FLY marches back and forth on the window looking for another place to march back and forth on the window the fly watches itself and in looking back upon itself sighs. they both look and think I look particularly fly today. what comradeship no, living creatures hadn't dreamed so much, had dreamed so much, as dreamed of in the window, each his own confessor, being especially frank each his own pardoner, being equally honest, each his own photograph of what he remembers as the best in a generation of flies! God is waiting for the fly to talk to Him!