

DIPLOMAT'S PROPAGANDA ATTEMPT EXPOSED

Correspondent of St. Louis Post-Dispatch Tells of Secret Conference When State Department Officer Tried to Make Press Associations Carry "Spokesman" Story of Mexican Bolshevism

By J. BART CAMPBELL

(Washington Correspondent of EDITOR & PUBLISHER)

"NO REASON TO DOUBT"—PROBERT

L. C. Probert, manager of the Washington Bureau of the Associated Press, made this statement to EDITOR & PUBLISHER when asked about the allegations made in Mr. Anderson's dispatch:

"We got the story in the usual course of news and we had no reason to doubt its accuracy."

"PRESENTED NO SPECTRE"—HOLMES

George R. Holmes, manager of the Washington Bureau of the International News Service, gave this statement to EDITOR & PUBLISHER Thursday:

"Because the State Department asked those present to preserve confidence about Mr. Olds' remarks, I do not feel at liberty to repeat them for publication.

"I will say, however, that the International News Service in none of its dispatches concerning this situation presented any spectre of a Mexican-fostered Bolshevik hegemony extending over Central America.

"I represented the International News Service at the conference in question and the International News Service for several days thereafter presented to its client newspapers what it considered to be the actual news and the real interpretation of what was going on."

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2.—Official and newspaper circles here have been deeply stirred by the reported action of Assistant Secretary of State Robert E. Olds, former law partner at St. Paul of Secretary of State Kellogg, in seeking to use the Associated Press, the United Press and the International News Service as vehicles for the dissemination of unfriendly propaganda aimed at the Mexican government.

A Senate investigation of Olds' confidential conference at the State Department with a representative of each of the three news services named, at which Olds is said to have suggested that the Mexican government be painted as Bolshevistic in the newspapers of the United States, is considered inevitable after Congress convenes Monday.

The "inside story" of what transpired at the confidential conference was well reported on the first page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* Sunday by Paul Y. Anderson, of its Washington staff. The Anderson story is yet to be denied by Olds or the State Department. As late as today EDITOR & PUBLISHER was informed by State Department officials that neither Mr. Olds nor the department had any comment to make.

The Scripps-Howard *Daily News*, of Washington, in reprinting the salient parts of the Anderson story yesterday, opened its article with this comment:

"Here's a close-up on a bit of international diplomacy under Secretary of State Kellogg—the inside story of a story which may have a Senate investigation as its sequel.

"Some days ago, to begin at the beginning, the *News* commented at some length on an Associated Press dispatch from here which began as follows: 'The specter of a Mexican-fostered Bolshevik hegemony intervening between the United States and Panama Canal has thrust itself into American-Mexican relations, already strained.'

"Obviously of State Department inspiration, we said as much, adding that 'if Secretary Kellogg is in possession of documents proving the menace the State Department is hinting at, he should produce them—not seek to inspire newspaper articles giving an impression for which his department is unwilling to assume the responsibility.'

EDITOR & PUBLISHER was informed that at the "confidential conference" Olds is said to have invited the Associated Press, which was represented by R. Kirk Simpson, State Department man, and the International News Service by George R. Holmes, head of its Washington bureau. Lowell Denny is the State Department man for the United Press. Denny declines to admit he was at the "conference." Carl D. Groat, head of the Washington Bureau of the United Press, said he cared to say about the "conference" that following it, the U. P. carried a Washington dispatch carefully worded to alleged gun-running activities in Nicaragua which were supposed to be sponsored by Mexico. The United Press did not depict the Mexican government as Bolshevistic, as Olds is reported to have requested.

The Anderson story exploded with a shell force upon the Capitol as well as administration circles, and aroused Senator William E. Borah, Republican, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and other Senators, Republican and Democratic, who felt that the whole matter will soon be hashed out on the Senate floor.

Anderson story clearly describes an extraordinary situation which has kindled the open indignation of not only the press but of Washington correspondents already weary of weekly "unconferences with cabinet officers, with the White House spokesmen, which they are expected to

carry "inspired" stories without being permitted to use a scintilla of quotation or other authority for direct statement to justify the assertions regarding domestic and international affairs of paramount importance made to them by their informants. The Anderson story follows:

"WASHINGTON, Nov. 27.—An alarming story of alleged Mexican efforts to foster Bolshevism throughout Central America, thus threatening American control of the Panama Canal, went out from Washington ten days ago and was published in hundreds of newspapers throughout the United States. Although the character of the story was such as to arouse deep resentment against the Mexican government, no authority was given for the statements it contained.

"Responsibility for the story has been traced by the Post-Dispatch correspondent to assistant Secretary of State Robert E. Olds. Not only did he make the statements upon which the story was based, but he took measures to insure their widespread publication. At the same time he refused to take the responsibility for it, either in person or for the State Department.

"Following is the inside account of what actually happened:

"A week ago last Tuesday the Washington bureau of the three national press associations, which supply virtually every daily newspaper in the country, received a telephone call from the State Department, saying that Olds desired to see the heads of the associations in his office at once on a matter of importance.

"Upon their arrival, Olds pledged the newspaper men not to quote him on what he was about to say, and then proceeded to make a statement.

"For more than a year, he said, the State Department had been concerned over the relations between the United States and Mexico, and those relations had now reached a very acute stage.

"It is an undeniable fact," he continued, "that the Mexican government today is a Bolshevik government. We cannot prove it, but we are morally certain that a warm bond of sympathy, if not an actual understanding, exists between Mexico City and Moscow.

"A steady stream of Bolshevik propaganda has been filtering from Mexico down through Central America, aimed at property rights, and designed to undermine society and governments as they are now constituted. We feel that this pic-

ture should be presented to the American people and I desired to ask for your advice and co-operation toward that end."

"It can very easily be done," one of the correspondents replied. "Let the State Department issue a statement to this effect, over the signature of the Secretary of State, and every newspaper in the country will publish it."

"Olds recoiled with an exclamation of apprehension.

"Oh! That is utterly impossible," he said. "Surely you must realize why the department cannot afford to be in the position of directing such a serious statement against a government with which it is officially on friendly terms."

"The correspondents politely refrained from pointing out that the department seemed eager enough to have the statement go out, so long as the responsibility was laid at some other door. However, they did protest against being asked to take the responsibility upon themselves, especially in view of the fact that their only information on the subject came from Olds.

"He explained that he was simply endeavoring to give them 'the background' of Mexican-American relations and he had supposed they would be able to work it into their news dispatches without attributing it to the State Department. He asked how, in their opinion, the statement would be received by the press of the country. One of them replied that it certainly would be ridiculed by the editors of the liberal newspapers.

"What would they do?" Olds then asked. "It were said that a Mexican fostered Bolshevik hegemony in Central America was menacing our control of the Panama Canal?"

"One of the correspondents said he thought most of them would laugh at it, but another said it undoubtedly would cause great alarm among the American people generally, even though the statement were made as from unofficial circles.

"It was then suggested that perhaps such a story could be tied onto the announcement that the State Department had decided to recognize the government of Adolfo Diaz in Nicaragua, President Diaz had appealed to the United States Government to aid in restoring peace in that country, and Secretary of State Kellogg followed with a warning that the United States Government was concerned over 'outside in-

tervention' in Nicaraguan affairs. It was known that this warning referred to reports that arms were being shipped from Mexico to Nicaragua to aid the Liberal uprising there.

"Accordingly, it was in connection with the announcement of the recognition of Diaz, made the following day, that the story of alleged Bolshevik activity by Mexico in Central America appeared in somewhat modified form. It was presented as the background which explained the present relations between the United States and Mexico.

"The natural presumption that Olds acted with the knowledge and approval of Secretary Kellogg is strengthened by the fact that no repudiation of the story has since come from the department. It is further strengthened by the circumstance that Olds and Kellogg are former law partners and close personal associates. That Olds would take such an extraordinary action in such a grave matter without first consulting his chief and friend is inconceivable to those who are familiar with procedure in the State Department.

"Olds and Kellogg were members of the same law firm in St. Paul, Minnesota. Olds was appointed Assistant Secretary of State in October, 1925, partly as a result of his long association with Kellogg. He is head of the legal division of the State Department.

"Official Washington has been speculating upon the source of the Mexican Bolshevik scare ever since the story appeared. It was realized that the story must have been inspired in some official quarter but no official had been found who would admit responsibility for it.

"Senator Borah of Idaho, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, listened with unconcealed interest to the disclosure of what had happened. He said he would make no public comment on it for the present, but intimated that he would have something to say later.

"Senator Norris, Republican, of Nebraska, was less reticent.

"When Congress convenes," he said, "I am going to see whether something cannot be done about the State Department practice of putting out hostile and anonymous propaganda against governments with whom we are on friendly relations. If these statements are true, the people are entitled to receive the facts from the officials who possess them and if they are not true it is an outrage that they should be put in circulation.

"I cannot imagine anything more discreditable than for one of the great departments of our government to inspire attacks upon a supposedly friendly nation while declining to accept the responsibility for them. Unless I am mistaken this subject is in for a thorough discussion when the Senate meets next month."

"Senator Claude Swanson of Virginia, ranking Democratic member of the Foreign Relations Committee, said he had his own opinion of that sort of business, but deemed it impolitic to say more at this time because of the delicate situation existing.

"Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, hero of the Daugherty Investigation in 1924, said:

"I was positive that yarn had been inspired by somebody in the State Department. Olds' action makes it perfectly plain that the State Department is trying to prepare public opinion in this country for a break in our diplomatic relations with Mexico. That it would stoop to inspire such a tale as this while refusing to take responsibility for it, is characteristic of the course which it has pursued ever since Frank B. Kellogg became Secretary of State.

"You can take it from me that something will be said about this business on the floor of the Senate soon after Congress convenes."

FIGURE SHARKS DISCOVER LUSH FIELD IN A.A.A.A. MAGAZINE REPORT

Preliminary Summary Indicates Undreamed Duplication, Ad Bureau Is Told, While Income Calculations Produce Astronomical Results

TREMENDOUS duplication in magazine circulation, more striking than even the most severe critics of the magazine structure have supposed, is seen to be indicated by the investigations conducted in that field by the research committee of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, according to an unnamed advertising man who is quoted in the current bulletin of the Bureau of Advertising of the American Newspaper Publishers Association. The commentator, whose remarks the bulletin carries at length, is said to have attended the recent open session of the agencies' meeting in Washington, and to have heard summarized the work of the research department in the magazine field.

Since that session copies of the report, which was compiled under the direction of Dr. Daniel Starch, have been mailed to members of the A. A. A. A. and to each of the 74 magazines whose circulations were investigated. The report has been given no other distribution, James O'Shaughnessy, executive secretary of the A. A. A. A., informed Editor & Publisher. He added that full opportunity would be given to members and to magazines concerned for revision, addition or correction of facts and conclusions before the report was made public.

In the preliminary presentation at Washington, it was shown that the survey was made to determine what proportion of magazine subscribers came under various income groups. These groups were as follows: Incomes of \$10,000 or over; incomes from \$5,000 to \$10,000; incomes from \$2,000 to \$5,000; incomes from \$1,000 to \$2,000; and incomes under \$1,000.

Four methods were used in obtaining data on circulation, the first being an occupational survey in which subscriber lists of the magazines were analyzed for 29 cities and 30 rural communities. From this data incomes were analyzed and classified.

The second method was a house-to-house survey, not based upon subscriber lists, but taking any houses selected by the investigator in 20 cities and 17 rural communities. Some 20,000 householders were interviewed.

The two other methods that were tried—personal interviews at news stands and mailed questionnaires—were disregarded because returns were uncertain and unreliable.

According to the Bureau of Advertising's bulletin, one man who made copious notes of the figures given by Dr. Starch received the distinct impression that the figures resulting from the original survey showed between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of the magazine subscribers were in the groups whose incomes ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000 a year.

As a few specific instances of this, 83.1 per cent of the circulation of one weekly was shown to go to people with from \$1,000 to \$5,000 income, and corresponding percentages for five other equally prominent magazines were respectively, 72 per cent, 80 per cent, 87 per cent, 86 per cent, 90 per cent.

The bulletin continues:

"Up to this point evidently the investigation made by Dr. Starch did not bear out the claims generally made by magazines, i. e.; 'that they go to people with higher than average income.' Had the investigation been left at this point the man quoted above feels confident that general ideas of the quality of magazine circulation might have had to be revised.

"But a corrective factor was introduced into the situation at this point of the inquiry. Dr. Starch pointed out that there was more than one wage earner per family on the average in the United States and from an analysis of addresses

in city directories, he determined the average number of wage earners per family in each of his income classifications.

"Taking this thought as his justification, he introduced a special survey of about 4,000 homes designed to correct the income estimate of the family living in each home on the following basis:

"Since in a certain percentage of the homes some member of the family besides its head works, a certain number of the homes must be rated higher in the income groups than the income of the head of the family would indicate. He determined what this income might be, but had an appraisal made of the value of each of the 4,000 homes and from this determined the approximate rental value. Then taking as his premise the theory that the average budget is said to show 20 per cent of a family's income is spent for rent or its equivalent, he multiplied the rental value by five to determine 'the actual income' of the family in the house.

"From the percentage determined by this procedure, Dr. Starch evidently asserted his right to introduce a corrective factor into the entire analysis by moving a certain percentage of each magazine reading group into the next higher income class. The notes taken from his lecture again showed that this resulted in moving some 30 per cent of the magazine reading families whose incomes were between \$5,000 and \$10,000 into the group whose incomes were over \$10,000. In a similar manner nearly 40 per cent of the next lower class was shifted into the class whose incomes ran from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and nearly 60 per cent of those whose incomes ran between \$2,000 and \$5,000 were rated as having incomes greater than \$5,000.

"No comment is made upon the rights or wrongs of this procedure. It was done and it must be assumed that so careful an investigator as Dr. Starch would hesitate to act upon an unstable basis.

"If we accept this corrective factor as being justified and representative of the true facts in regard to circulation, some interesting conclusions in regard to magazine duplication may be drawn.

"For instance, in the group with incomes of \$10,000, there are more than 1,700,000 magazine buyers, according to the A. A. A. A. figures. Yet only 259,809 people pay an income tax on \$10,000 or more. Either Secretary Mellon's figures are too low or people in this class take between six and seven magazines per family.

"In the next class, with incomes from \$5,000 to \$10,000, there are, according to the A. A. A. A. figures, nearly 6,250,000 magazine buyers. According to Secretary Mellon's returns, only 437,330 persons admit taxable incomes in this financial bracket. Families in this group, if the figures are run out to a logical conclusion, must take between 14 and 15 magazines per home.

"In the \$2,000 to \$5,000 group, the same basis of calculation would indicate a duplication of between five and six magazines per home and in the \$1,000 to \$2,000 group nearly five magazines to a home.

"Why not go further," said the gentleman who attended this session and who has studied the figures with much interest, 'why not find out just where this duplication occurs? Which magazines duplicate with other magazines? Information of this kind ought to be a real guide to the advertising agency and of great value to the buyer of magazine space. So far the investigation seems to be very carefully and painstakingly done. It stops, however, at a very interesting point.

"If a magazine advertiser wants to reach all the \$5,000 to \$10,000 class, does

he want his circulation duplicated 15 times? Such duplication is waste that adds to selling expense.

"And here is another thought that is with checking over—the 'spending power' and the magazine circulation in each class. That is, there are say 1,700,000 magazine subscribers in the \$10,000-\$10,000 yearly income. Say for the sake of argument, there is no duplication in the magazine circulation, and we find a spending power in this class of more than \$17,000,000,000 a year!

"Carry on the same multiplication through the other classes and we get an apparent spending power of more than \$115,000,000,000 a year from the magazine readers.

"Economists estimate the entire spending power of the United States as \$70,000,000,000 annually. There is a wide difference between magazine readers with an apparent \$115,000,000,000 to \$120,000,000,000 a year to spend and a total national spending power of \$70,000,000,000.

"Is there duplication in magazine circulation? If so, where is it?

"The agents should run out the totals and settle a point that undoubtedly is costing the advertisers millions every year."

DAILY TIES UP WITH RADIO ADVERTISING

Lansing State Journal Selling Combination Radio and Newspaper Space by Agreement With WREO

A radio advertising tie-up has been put into effect by the *Lansing (Mich.) State Journal*, it was announced recently, coincident with commercialization, for the first time of radio station WREO, owned and operated by the Reo Motor Car Company of Lansing.

Under the new plan the advertising department of the local daily will solicit for a combination of newspaper and radio advertising. Leading firms operating in the local field will be urged to sponsor an hour's radio program from WREO, for whose facilities a definite price has been fixed, and a full page in the *State Journal*, to call attention to the radio program, will be sold at the same time.

The Jury-Rowe Furniture company, which has a number of stores in Michigan cities, was the first to take advantage of the new plan, putting a dance program by a popular orchestra "on the air" along with special feature numbers, and informing the public of the fact via the printed page as well. The F. N. Arbaugh department store followed with a similar program and newspaper copy. Success of the newspaper-radio "hook-up," it is expected will mean similar arrangements throughout the country.

EVENING APPEAL STARTS

New Memphis Daily's First Issue Dec. 1 Had 52 Pages

(By Telegraph to Editor & Publisher)

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 2.—The *Evening Appeal*, printed by the Commercial Publishing Company, publishers of the *Commercial Appeal*, started publication Dec. 1 with 52 pages. It was the largest regular week day newspaper that has been printed in Memphis. The *Evening Appeal* contained 300 columns of advertising. Ninety thousand copies were printed.

The *Evening Appeal* has the exclusive three leased wire service of the Associated Press.

The personnel of the staff includes: George Morris, editor; Alfred Mynders, news editor; George Williamson, market editor; Bob Pique, sports editor; Miss Margaret Forbes, society editor, and Eugene Travis, city editor.

The *Evening Appeal* and the *Morning Commercial Appeal* will operate separately in the editorial department.

The business, advertising, and circulation departments will be identical, it was announced.

631 ADS SUBMITTED IN BUREAU'S CONTEST

Judges to Be Named This Week to Pick Winner of \$500 Prize for Best Copy Boosting Newspaper Space

Contestants from every state in the union and from many Canadian provinces entered the \$500 newspaper advertising contest of the Bureau of Advertising of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, which closed Nov. 30 as scheduled.

A total of 245 different entrants, submitting 631 different pieces of advertising copy promoting the newspaper as the best medium, were in the bureau's hands by midnight Tuesday the closing hour. Between that time and morning, more than 150 additional entries arrived, Thomas H. Moore, in charge of the contest announced. After deliberation it was decided these had come too late, and they are being returned to the senders.

Judges were to be picked by the end of this week or the first of next, and the process of elimination to find the winners begun. Mr. Moore said it would be impossible to tell now when this task would be finished.

While the judges had not yet been picked, Mr. Moore said they would probably represent the agency field, the national advertisers, and the newspaper publishers.

The contest is distinguished by the number of entries made by individual contestants. One contestant turned in more than 50 different advertisements explaining the advantages of newspaper space. Several were able to produce more than a score.

"From looking over the entries, it is my impression that this contest will represent a remarkable contribution to the business of advertising newspaper advertising," Mr. Moore declared.

FOUR A'S START PROBE OF RADIO CHAOS

Thomas F. Logan, Chairman of Committee Investigating Conditions—To Make Report Early in 1927

An investigation of alleged chaotic conditions in the air is being made by the American Association of Advertising Agencies in the interests of members which have clients using broadcasting stations as media.

Thomas F. Logan, of Lord & Thomas and Logan, advertising agency, is chairman of the A.A.A.A. radio committee in charge. He will make a report on his investigations at the next quarterly meeting of the association's executive committee to be held early in 1927. Up to then, his office reported, Mr. Logan had "nothing to say." Lord & Thomas at Logan handle the account of the Radio Corporation of America, which now owns the National Broadcasting Company, operating the biggest stations in the country, including WEAF and WJZ.

James O'Shaughnessy, A.A.A.A. secretary, expressed the belief there was chaos, just "the threat of it." He said he believed the situation was self-curtive.

DeWITT NAMED PUBLISHER

Richard DeWitt, son of E. D. DeWitt of Palmer, DeWitt & Palmer, newspaper brokers, New York, has been named publisher of the *Canandaigua (N. Y.) Messenger*.

DAVIS BOOK OUT

Stories written by Robert H. Davis, the column of the *New York Sun*, "Bob Davis Recalls" have been put in book form by D. Appleton, under the title "Over My Left Shoulder."

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SE PONE DE MANIFIESTO QUE UN DIPLOMATICO INTENTO HACER PRO-
PAGANDA.

Washington, a 2 de diciembre.-- La anunciada actitud del subsecretario de Estado Roberto E. Olds, ex socio en St. Paul - del secretario de Estado Kellogg, al tratar de valerse de la Prensa Asociada, la Prensa Unida y el Servicio Internacional Noticiero, como vehículos para diseminar propagandas en contra del Gobierno de México, ha causado excitación en los círculos periodísticos y oficiales de esta Ciudad.

Se cree que es inevitable una investigación en el Senado, en cuanto el Congreso se haya reunido el lunes, acerca de la conferencia que confidencialmente tuvo Olds en el Departamento de Estado con representantes de cada uno de los servicios de prensa citados. Se dice que en esa conferencia Olds sugirió la idea de que se pintara al Gobierno de México como bolshevique en la prensa de los Estados Unidos.

El "secreto" de lo que ~~transcurre~~^{se publicó} en la conferencia confidencial fue enunciado en la primera página del Saint Louis Post-Dispatch del domingo, por Paul Y. Anderson, que forma parte del cuerpo de redacción de dicho periódico en Washington. El relato de Anderson será rebatido por el señor Olds o el Departamento de Estado. A última hora de hoy El Editor & Publisher obtuvo noticias en el Departamento de Estado que ni el señor Olds ni el Departamento tenían comentarios que hacer sobre el particular.

El Daily News de Scripps-Howard, de Washington, al publicar o reproducir los puntos salientes de la versión de Anderson ayer, abría su artículo con este comentario:

"He ahí el resultado de una breve salida diplomática al mando del secretario de Estado Kellogg - el aspecto subjetivo de una versión que puede redundar en una investigación ante el Senado.

"Hace algunos días, para empezar por el comienzo, el NEWS comentó ampliamente un despacho de la Prensa Asociada que comenzaba así: "El espectro de una hegemonía bolshevista interpuesto entre los Estados Unidos y el Canal de Panamá, y fomentado por México, se ha venido a reflejar en las relaciones de ambos países, de suyo tirantes.

"Ante la inspiración del Departamento de Estado nosotros dijimos otro tanto, agregando, que "si el Secretario Kellogg se hallaba en posesión de documentos que probaran la amenaza que el Departamento de Estado indicaba, debería mostrarlos, y no tratar de inspirar artículos de periódico que dejaran una impresión que el mismo Departamento de Estado no estaba dispuesto a sostener aceptando la responsabilidad."

Se dice que Olds invitó a la Prensa Asociada, que estuvo representada por R. Kirk Simpson, que depende del Depar-

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tamento de Estado, a su vez. El International News Service estuvo representado por George R. Holmes, jefe de la Oficina de dicha empresa en Washington. Ludwell Denny es el indicado por el Departamento de Estado por lo que hace a la Prensa Unida. Denny se niega a confesar que estuvo en la conferencia. Carl D. Groat, jefe de la Oficina de la United Press en Washington, que él lo único que podía decir acerca de la conferencia era que a raíz de ella, la United Press envió desde Washington un despacho cuidadosamente confinado a las pretendidas actividades de barcos cargados de armas en aguas de Nicaragua y que, según se suponía, viajaban amparados por México. La prensa unida no pintó al Gobierno de México como bolshevista, como se dice que declaró Olds.

La versión de Anderson estalló como bomba en el Capitolio y en los círculos administrativos, moviendo al senador William E. Borah, senador por Idaho, presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores, y otros senadores, tanto entre los republicanos como entre los demócratas, que presentían que todo el asunto habría de llegar muy pronto a discutirse en el Senado.

La versión de Anderson describe a las claras una situación extraordinaria que ha provocado la franca indignación no sólo de los senadores sino de los corresponsales de Washington que empezaban a cansarse de conferencias "no oficiales" con funcionarios del Gabinete o representantes de la Casa Blanca; conferencias sostenidas con el propósito de que inspirasen versiones pero sin la menor cita o signo de autorización que afirmasen las declaraciones oficiales sobre asuntos internacionales de suma importancia. La versión de Anderson continúa:

"Washington, noviembre 27.- Un rumor alarmante acerca de los esfuerzos que se hacen en México para fomentar el Bolshévismo en la América Central, amenazando así con apoderarse del Canal de Panamá, salió de Washington hace diez días y fue publicado en cientos de periódicos en todos los Estados Unidos. Aunque el carácter de la versión bastaba a suscitar hondo resentimiento contra el Gobierno de México, ninguna autoridad se dio a las declaraciones que contenía.

"La responsabilidad por tal versión ha sido atribuida con fundamento por el corresponsal del Post-Dispatch, al secretario adjunto Robert E. Olds. No solamente fue él quien hizo las declaraciones en que la versión se basó, sino que dio providencias para propagar la noticia en profusión. Al mismo tiempo se negó a hacerse responsable de ella, personalmente o en nombre del Departamento de Estado.

"A continuación relatamos el aspecto íntimo de la cuestión:

"Hace una semana, el martes, las oficinas de las tres empresas noticieras en Washington, que proporcionan noticias para casi todos los diarios del país, recibió un telefonema

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del Departamento de Estado diciendo que Olds deseaba ver a los jefes de dichas empresas en su oficina inmediatamente para tratar un asunto de importancia.

"Al presentarse los mencionados jefes, Olds pidió que por ningún motivo se fuera a citar su declaración como oficial, y prosiguió:

"Desde hace más de un año, dijo, el Departamento ha venido preocupándose por las relaciones entre los Estados Unidos y México, y esas relaciones han llegado a un momento de bastante tirantez. Es innegable, continuó, que el Gobierno actual de México es bolshevique. No podemos probarlo, pero nos hallamos moralmente convencidos que ~~existe~~ un estrecho lazo de simpatía, si no una verdadera inteligencia, entre la Ciudad de México y Moscovia.

"Una constante corriente de propaganda se ha estado filtrando de México hacia la América Central, encaminada a elucidar derechos de propiedad, y destinada a minar los gobiernos y las sociedades tal como ahora se hallan constituidas. Creemos que esos cuadros han de hacerse públicos en los Estados Unidos, y deseamos que ustedes nos den su consejo y nos impartan ayuda para realizar ese fin."

"Eso es muy fácil de hacer", respondió uno de los corresponsales. Que el Departamento de Estado haga una declaración sobre el particular, con la firma del Secretario de Estado, y no habrá periódico del país que ~~deje~~ de publicar la noticia.

Olds retrocedió exclamando:

materialmente

"Oh, eso es/imposible!" Ustedes deben comprender que el Departamento no puede aceptar la responsabilidad de declaración tan seria contra un Gobierno con quién conserva relaciones amistosas".

"Los corresponsales atentamente se abstuvieron de indicar que el Departamento se hallaba bastante ansioso de que saliera la declaración, siempre que la responsabilidad se arrojará contra alguien que no fuera el propio Departamento. Sin embargo volvieron a protestar contra el hecho de que se les pidiera hacerse responsables, especialmente cuando la única información que recibían procedía de Olds. Este insistió en que se limitaba a darles "el fondo" de las relaciones Mexico-americanas; que él suponía que ellos podrían arreglarlo en sus despachos sin atribuirlo precisamente al Departamento de Estado. Les preguntó su opinión acerca del efecto que haría semejante declaración en la prensa del país. Uno de los corresponsales respondió que seguramente sería tachado de ridículo entre los editores de periódicos liberales.

"¿Que harían?, pregunto Olds, si "se dijera que la hegemonía de México, de tendencias bolshevistas, amenazaba con hacernos perder el dominio sobre el Canal de Panamá"?

"Uno de los corresponsales le contestó que él creía que muchos se reirían de la versión; pero otro contestó que ciertamente causaría gran alarma entre los norteamericanos en general, aun cuando la declaración se hiciera como procedente de círculos no oficiales.

"Se sugirió entonces que semejante versión podía dar lugar a que se creyera que el Departamento de Estado había decidido reconocer al Gobierno de Adolfo Díaz en Nicaragua. El Presidente Díaz había pedido a los Estados Unidos que lo ayudaran a restaurar la paz en aquel país, y el secretario de Estado Kellogg contestó advirtiéndole que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos estaba preocupado con la "ingerencia exterior" en asuntos de Nicaragua. Se supo que esa advertencia se refería a rumores de que se estaban embarcando armas de México a Nicaragua para ayudar la revuelta liberal. Por consiguiente, en relación con el anunciado reconocimiento de Díaz al día siguiente, la versión del pretendido bolshevismo y sus actividades en México y América Central apareció algo modificada. Se dio como la causa primordial de las presentes relaciones entre los Estados Unidos y México.

"La natural suposición de que Olds procedió de acuerdo y con el consentimiento del secretario Kellogg se haya reforzada por el hecho de que el Departamento no desmintió la versión. Queda además reforzada por la circunstancia de que Olds y Kellogg fueron socios e íntimos comparsas. Es inconcebible que Olds se lanzara a semejante aventura sin el consentimiento de su jefe y amigo; así opinan al menos los que conocen a los dos en el Departamento de Estado.

"Olds y Kellogg fueron socios de la misma casa de abogados de Saint Paul, Minesota. Olds fue nombrado Secretario adjunto en octubre de 1925, particularmente en vista de su antigua amistad con Kellogg. El dirige el departamento legal de dicho Ministerio. En los círculos oficiales de Washington se ha hablado mucho de la procedencia del terror hacia el bolshevismo mexicano desde que se supo la noticia. Se supuso desde luego que la versión debía provenir de fuentes oficiales, por más que ningún funcionario se hacía responsable de ella. El senador Borah de Idaho, presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado, escuchó con sincero interés las revelaciones de lo ocurrido. Dijo que no haría ningún comentario en público por el momento; pero insinuó que diría algo más tarde.

El senador Norris, de Nebraska, se mostro' menos reticente.

"Cuando el Congreso se reuna, dijo, voy a ver si se puede hacer algo acerca de esa costumbre del Departamento del

Departamento de Estado de andar lanzando propagandas hostiles en forma anónima contra gobiernos con quienes conservamos relaciones amistosas. Si esas declaraciones son verídicas, el público tiene derecho a exigir que los funcionarios que posean semejantes datos los publiquen; y si los hechos no son verídicos tal proceder significa un ultraje. No puede imaginarme que haya proceder más despreciable que el ~~que~~ de un Departamento del Gobierno que se dedicara a inspirar ataques contra una nación amiga, negándose a aceptar responsabilidades por ello. A menos que me equivoque este es asunto que ha de discutirse a fondo en el Senado el mes próximo.

"El senador Claude Swanson, de Virginia, preclaro miembro democrático de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores en el Senado, dijo que él tenía su opinión particular sobre esa clase de negocios; pero consideraba que no era prudente hacer declaraciones en vista de la situación que actualmente prevalece.

"El senador Burton K. Wheeler, de Montana, protagonista de la investigación del caso Daugherty en 1924, dijo:

"Estaba yo convencido de que ese ovillo venía del Departamento de Estado inspirado por alguien de allí. La actitud de Olds aclara la opinión de que el Departamento de Estado esta preparando la opinión pública del país para un rompimiento de relaciones diplomáticas con México. El hecho de que allí se haya inspirado semejantes rumores, negándose a aceptar responsabilidades, es peculiar de la conducta seguida por dicho Departamento desde que Frank B. Kellogg fue nombrado secretario. Pueden ustedes creerme que habrá decirse algo acerca de este asunto en el Senado en cuanto el Congreso vuelva a reunirse."

Tradujo: M.G.
Cons. Gen. de México,
New York.