

PROFILES

AMBASSADOR

DIPLOMACY, some other claimants notwithstanding, is probably the oldest profession in the world. The first diplomats, as Sir Harold Nicolson has pointed out, were most likely anthropoid apes who divided up the jungle among themselves for hunting purposes—often so ineffectually that they were soon at each other's throats over disputed territorial rights. The apes are credited with having introduced one of the earliest diplomatic devices—diplomatic immunity, which guaranteed an emissary that, whatever else became of him, he wouldn't be murdered. Around 600 B.C., the ambassadors of the Greek city-states theoretically enjoyed the same protection, but actually their lives were always in danger. In those days, diplomacy had other drawbacks, too; ambassadors got no salary and were forbidden to accept presents, under penalty of execution, and their only compensation was a spending allowance, which, in the manner of members of the Foreign Service of the United States today, they considered far from adequate. If a man successfully brought off a mission, the most he could expect was a garland of wild-olive leaves, a free meal in the town hall, and a commemorative tablet; if he failed, he was politically destroyed, if not worse. As diplomacy was further refined, under the Byzantines and the Venetians, it became more ceremonial and more riddled with duplicity. Then, in the time of Richelieu, the French raised the level of diplomatic morality and developed diplomatic methods and procedures—intricate, perhaps, but workmanlike—that have persisted to the present time. But if the forms and trappings of diplomacy have remained much the same since the seventeenth century, the diplomatic strategies of individual nations have varied greatly with historical circumstances. In contrast to the British Foreign Office, for example, our State Department, ever since its creation, on July 27, 1789, by a simple one-page Act of Congress, has been swayed by the vicissitudes of a national foreign policy responsive to the needs of the moment, instead of adhering to a consistent philosophy of government and an enduring set of aims.

Even before 1789, the young nation entered what has been called the Golden Age of American Diplomacy, which lasted through the third decade of the



John Moors Cabot

nineteenth century. Every President from Washington himself to Jackson had had some diplomatic experience, and the era was notable for a score or so of brilliant envoys, like Benjamin Franklin and John Jay, who, operating very much on their own, secured recognition for the United States and financial or military support from European nations. Then, in the eighteenth-thirties, the United States withdrew into its shell, and for many years this country remained largely aloof from Europe and indifferent to its representation there, its diplomatic "corps" dwindling until it was composed mainly of men who in their youth, as family friends of earlier emissaries, had accompanied them to their posts and had found that they liked the life enough to stay on. As recently as the eve of the First World War, the United States had embassies in only ten nations—elsewhere it was represented by mere legations or consular posts—and even in 1924 the formal diplomatic corps, as distinct from the consular corps, which was somewhat larger, consisted of just a hundred and twenty-two men. In that year, the two corps merged to form the Foreign Service of the United States—a body of career men who fill practically all of our diplomatic positions, except, of course, those ambassadorships that the President sees fit to assign to outside, or "political," appointees. The

United States now has embassies in ninety-three countries, and some sixteen thousand Americans and foreign citizens—two or three thousand of them Foreign Service officers and the rest specialists of one kind or another—work abroad for the State Department or for its directly affiliated agencies and deal with everything from atomic matters to crop-rotation schemes and tours of visiting American musicians. Nowadays, almost any nation, no matter how small or how new, is accorded a full-fledged ambassador once we have recognized its existence. The ambassador in each post, who is also known as Chief of Mission, shall, in the language of a 1954 Executive Order, "serve as the channel of authority on foreign policy and shall provide foreign policy direction to all representatives of United States agencies . . . and he shall assume responsibility for assuring the unified development and execution of [all] programs." In general, though an ambassador doesn't get as much chance to improvise policy as he once did, he has a far greater number of intricate day-by-day perplexities to face, the determination of which often demands on-the-spot judgments that can be at least as tough to make as basic policy decisions. An ambassador who once might have sent off his dispatches to Washington every few weeks, or even months, is now in daily or hourly telegraphic or telephonic touch with his superiors at home, and in addition he is apt to fly home fairly often for personal consultations, from which he may return to his post with a new set of directives. The expansion of our need for diplomatic representation has meant that career diplomats move from post to post far more frequently than they used to; whereas a top-ranking man formerly served in only three or four countries in his entire diplomatic lifetime, such a man is now likely to be assigned to at least a dozen posts.

On the whole, diplomatic career men find that their quiet assignments and their exciting ones average out over the years, but there are exceptions, and one veteran officer whose record shows an unusually high proportion of trouble spots is John Moors Cabot, of the Boston Cabots, who, having served through crises in Argentina, Yugoslavia, and China since the Second World War, was named in May, 1959, as Ambassador to Brazil, a country whose at-



"They're all enjoying themselves. There must be something wrong with you!"

mosphere has for some time been one of acute nationalism and economic peril. Cabot was sent to Brazil under unusual circumstances, taking over after Clare Boothe Luce had accepted the post and then immediately resigned it, following an exchange of insults with Senator Wayne Morse, of Oregon. The Senator had opposed her appointment, and she had suggested that his brain was addled because he had once been "kicked in the head by a horse." While Mr. Morse had suffered mouth injuries when a horse kicked him in the face at a horse show in Virginia in 1951, it had not occurred to anyone else that he was otherwise damaged, and Mrs. Luce's diagnosis resulted in general resentment against her among his loyal colleagues in the Senate, whereupon she quit. Cabot, who was Ambassador to Colombia at the time, was then proposed for the Brazilian post, and one of

the few questions put to him by senators was "Will you have to divest yourself of any interests of an equestrian nature?" Cabot, who looks horsey but isn't, replied, diplomatically, "No, I'm allergic to horses." His appointment was unanimously confirmed.

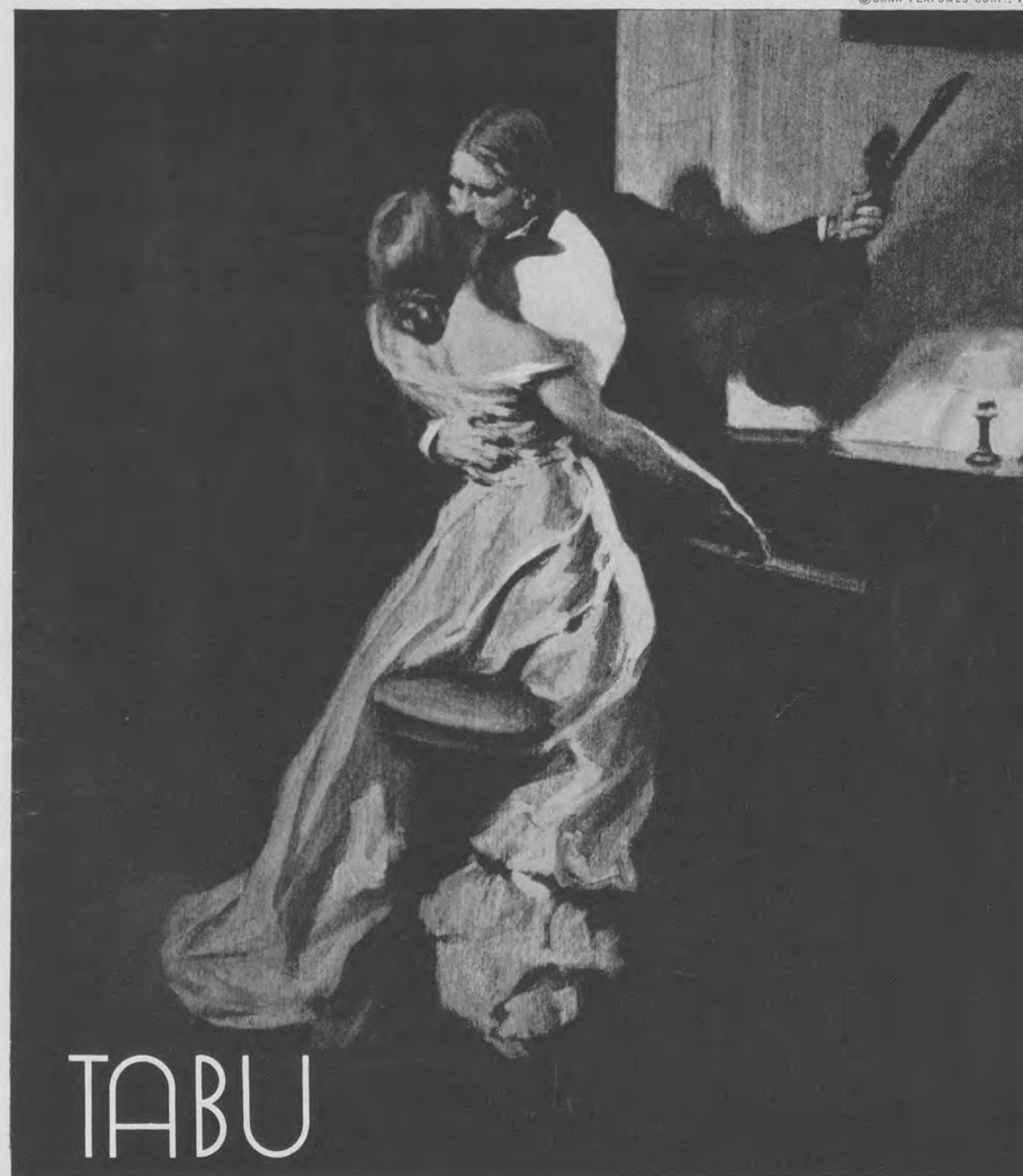
Cabot's assignment to Brazil is his eighteenth in the three and a half decades he has been a career diplomat. "It is always an emotional experience to leave one post and take up a new one," he wrote to a friend soon after his arrival in Rio de Janeiro. "A new post is something of a tonic, with new people to meet, new things to experience, new problems to face." Actually, Brazil was not altogether new to him, for he had served from 1932 through 1935 as third and then as second secretary at our Embassy in Rio. The atmosphere then, however, was considerably different, and the Cabots—he had re-

cently married the former Elizabeth Lewis—found life gay and easygoing. Beyond the fact that he naturally has far greater responsibilities as Ambassador than he had as second secretary, and that he was faced upon his second arrival in Rio with a far more serious and touchy situation, the mere physical act of moving to Brazil was much harder for the Cabots this time than last. Back in the thirties, when they were young in the Foreign Service, they travelled light, but they have since picked up a great many possessions, and they can't resist taking the bulk of these along wherever they go—a weakness that has earned them a reputation in diplomatic circles for domestic elegance but that has caused them an increasingly severe headache with each transfer. Cabot's letter continued:

There is a saying in the Foreign Service that three transfers are the equivalent of one fire, and as far as we're concerned that's been the case. Rain, dampness, rough handling, bad packing, insects, pilferage, and a number of other hazards must always be considered, and what made things tough this time was that we didn't know, when we went on leave to Washington in the spring from

our previous post in Colombia, that we were going to be transferred. So everything in Bogotá had to be packed for us by other people, and despite all the care that was taken, needless to say, there was a certain confusion. We remembered the ambassadorial residence in Rio as a large, rather pretentious house that has all the charm and intimacy of a railway station, and we knew it would not be a small task to soften its appearance with our personal things and make it a pleasanter place in which to live. As a rule, what we haven't lugged around from post to post we've stored in our home in Washington or in our summer residence, in Manchester, Massachusetts. Since the Rio residence is so big, we had to pull down a lot of stuff from both places. Fortunately, with pictures, books, scrolls, silver, and assorted knickknacks, the place no longer looks so imposingly empty as it did at first.

While Mrs. Cabot assumed most of the burden of getting the Rio house in order, her husband concentrated on paying the courtesy calls expected of a newly arrived diplomat. In this round,



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he had to visit about fifty other ambassadors and also pay his respects to perhaps twenty-five high-ranking Brazilian officials. Moreover, he also had to entertain all of them, which, Cabot said, called for "considerable generalship" on the part of his wife. Luckily, Mrs. Cabot has long since mastered the arts of diplomatic courtesy and logistics. Wherever they go, she imports certain American specialties from S. S. Pierce, in Boston, and she makes a point of serving menus that are a mixture of American dishes, French dishes, and the dishes of whatever country she and her husband are in. In each new country, she quickly has to acquaint herself with the social hierarchy—a job that goes far beyond a mere observance of the standard rules of "Protocol, Precedence, and Formalities" that are set forth in the "Foreign Service Manual"—and she is proud of being able to say that she has never seated anyone improperly at the dinner table. In Rio, the Cabots seldom have an evening to themselves; if they aren't entertaining, they are being entertained, by Brazilians or by other members of the diplomatic colony. Cabot doesn't much enjoy rich, formal dinners—his wife says that each week he begins to look green after his fourth—but he realizes they are both unavoidable and, on occasion, valuable. "The social whirl in the old days was a major feature of diplomacy, and this was mainly because the people who created policy were the ones who would naturally circulate socially," he says. "It's still true, of course, though not nearly to the extent it was. Now you have to entertain and go out, but you also have to find time to do what you consider really important—moving around the country and talking to all kinds of people, for instance. These activities keep you awfully busy and make diplomatic life more complicated, but then all life is more complicated nowadays, isn't it?"

Life for Cabot in the nearly two years he has now been in Brazil has been complicated by severer trials than receptions and dinner parties, especially during the last several months, when there was a changeover in administration in Brazil as well as in the United States. With the election last October of Jânio Quadros, as President, replacing Juscelino Kubitschek, and with the election of President Kennedy, Cabot had to deal with the reorientation of American economic and social policy in Brazil. This task was not made any easier for Cabot by his uncertainty over his own future—whether or not President Kennedy would want him to re-



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main in Brazil. There were a number of rumors, in fact, that he was about to be transferred, but finally, in mid-February, the President announced that Cabot, along with a number of other career ambassadors, was being asked to stay in his post indefinitely, and the guess now is that he will be there another year, anyway. During the period of suspense, Cabot was diverted by the truly extraordinary problem of the Santa Maria, the Portuguese luxury liner that was seized by a group of rebels opposing the Salazar regime, in Portugal. After running its wild course, the Santa Maria was finally tracked down at sea by American search planes, and Cabot was engaged in some fast last-minute dickering to obtain permission for United States Navy planes to conduct the ship to the Brazilian port of Recife. When the ship docked, Cabot's staff, with the help of American Navy officers, had to see to it that the forty-two American passengers were safely debarked and that plans were made for their return to the United States. "I've had a lot of strange things to do in my diplomatic career, but this was the first time I had to contend with that sort of tangle," Cabot remarked afterward. "We were negotiating in some pretty murky political waters, and the switchover of regimes in Brazil didn't make things any easier."

Cabot has a natural proclivity for involving himself personally in the problems of a country he is in, and he has done so right along in Brazil. Early in 1959, nationalist pressure had brought about the seizure by the Kubitschek government of an American-owned power plant in the town of Pôrto Alegre, and additional seizures have since been threatened, accompanied by insistent agitation to resume diplomatic and commercial ties with the Soviet Union and, now, with Communist China as well. Even before Cabot was through observing his initial diplomatic amenities, in the spring of 1959, he began delivering public speeches aimed at correcting the deteriorating relations between Brazil and the United States, and the results he achieved undoubtedly had a lot to do with President Kennedy's decision to keep him at his post. Cabot has successfully resorted to this direct approach on several occasions in the past; over the last decade he has acquired the reputation in the State Department of being a singularly effective grass-roots diplomat. Though he retains many of his Bostonian ways, he is not one of those Cabots who communicate only with God, and in every country where he has served, he has made it a point to

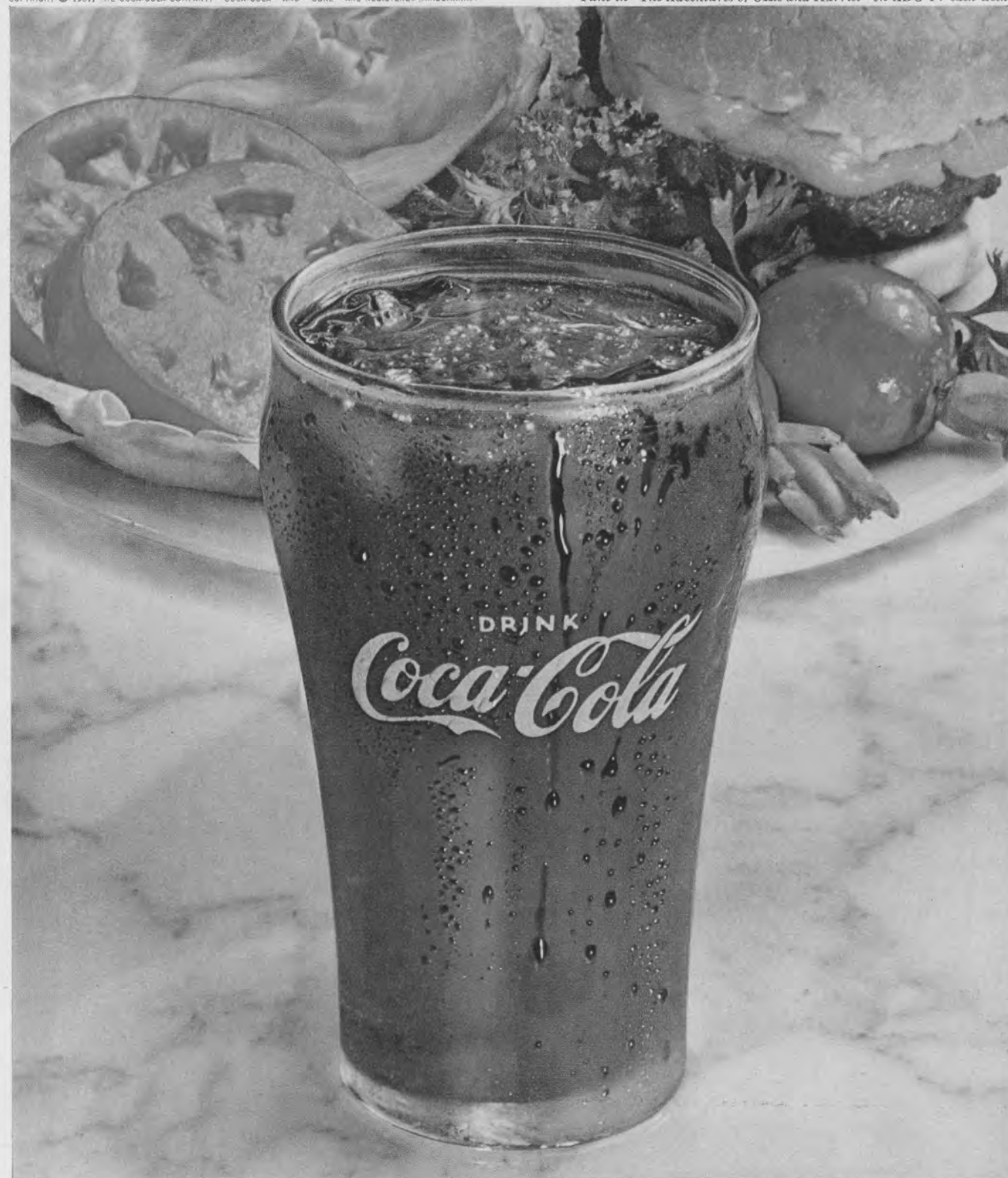


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get about and talk with as many people as possible; besides making speeches before formal groups in the principal centers of the country he is stationed in, he beats around the countryside, answering questions at informal gatherings of average citizens, who, he finds, are invariably both puzzled and vastly misinformed about what the United States is up to. Cabot believes that almost everything a nation as big and powerful as the United States does is bound to be subjected to the closest scrutiny abroad, and that it is best to meet any criticisms and doubts openly and head on.

CABOT, who is fifty-nine years old, is the only member of his immediate family ever to have chosen a diplomatic career (Henry Cabot Lodge is his fourth cousin once removed), and by doing so he broke a tradition in which practically all Cabots became merchants or industrialists or doctors. He is in the fortunate position of benefiting from a family fortune that provides him with a private income of generous proportions—something that an ambassador needs nowadays unless he is willing to limit his entertaining to the modest sort made possible by his allowance from the State Department. As an ambassador—or Career Minister, to give him his official Foreign Service title—Cabot gets a salary of twenty-seven thousand five hundred dollars a year, and his so-called representation allowance in Brazil is eight thousand dollars a year, which is fairly high as these things go, yet is scarcely adequate for the amount of entertaining he has to do. Cabot's money does not come, as some Latin-American critics of United States policy have charged, from the United Fruit Company, of which his older brother Thomas was once president, but from the Cabot Corporation, the world's largest producer of carbon black. The company, which has annual sales of sixty million dollars, was started back in 1882 by Cabot's father, Godfrey Lowell Cabot, who has just turned a hundred, and who, until he began to decline in health a few years ago, walked spryly every day, rain or shine, between the family's Boston home, at 242 Beacon Street, and his office on Franklin Street, two miles away. Thomas Cabot now runs the business, and though John was never interested in it as such, he hasn't objected to sharing in its profits.

Despite having rejected a typical Cabot career, the Ambassador remains unquestionably a Cabot in manner and appearance. He is tall—six feet three—and rangy, and has a long, rather bony

47

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face, with a long, thin nose beneath a lofty brow. He wears a carefully trimmed mustache on a broadly curved upper lip that is often raised in a toothy smile but seldom in a hearty laugh. His bouncy movement and exceptionally long legs suggest a tennis player, and, in fact, he is one, having won trophies in club tournaments in a number of the capitals to which he has been assigned. On the court, he dresses in flawless, formal white. Elsewhere, he dresses well but casually, fancying white shirts with button-down collars and soft-colored suits and ties. While the State Department is more tolerant of informality these days than it used to be, Cabot occasionally carries the new tendency to a point that embarrasses some of his more conservative confreres. One Foreign Service officer recalls an evening in Washington when he and his wife were to meet the Cabots at the Sulgrave Club for dinner before they all went out on a bowling date. "There was some question about how to dress, and I compromised on a brown flannel suit and a pair of rubber-soled sports shoes," this associate says, "but when we got to the club, Jack came striding in with the dirtiest pair of tennis shoes on I've ever seen, along with an old pair of slacks and a sports jacket. Eyebrows went up all over the dining room, but, being a Cabot, he didn't mind at all."

If being a Cabot makes it easy for the Ambassador to disregard censure, there are times when it weighs him down. "Jack is proud of his name, of course, but he wears it and his background as both a sceptre and a scar," another of his diplomatic associates has said. "There's nothing ostentatious about him, and he's not any kind of a snob, or even an iota snooty. In fact, he's extremely gregarious and friendly, not to say a bit Saint Bernardish. He can't help what he is, though. Just being a Boston Brahmin has made him give quite a lot of people the impression that he's a stiff fellow. It's something he's fully aware of, and he fights it all the time, but no matter how hard he fights, he can never convince some people that he's anything but an inbred New Englander. You can take one look at Jack and listen to him say five words, and you know he couldn't possibly be from one of the rectangular states. The historical state is obviously his home. He would never get into a club in Peoria." Another Foreign Service officer who admires Cabot's zeal for roving about but who isn't convinced that he ever gets to know people really well, or that people get to know him, says,



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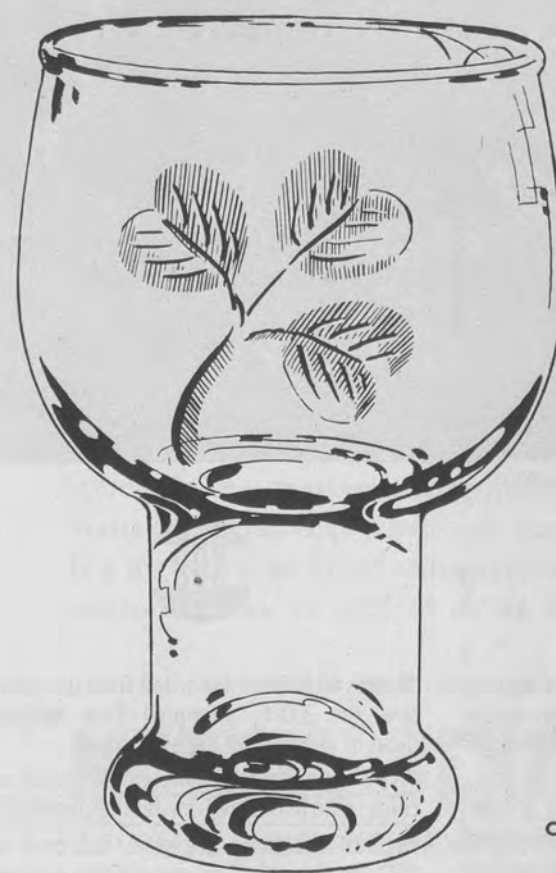
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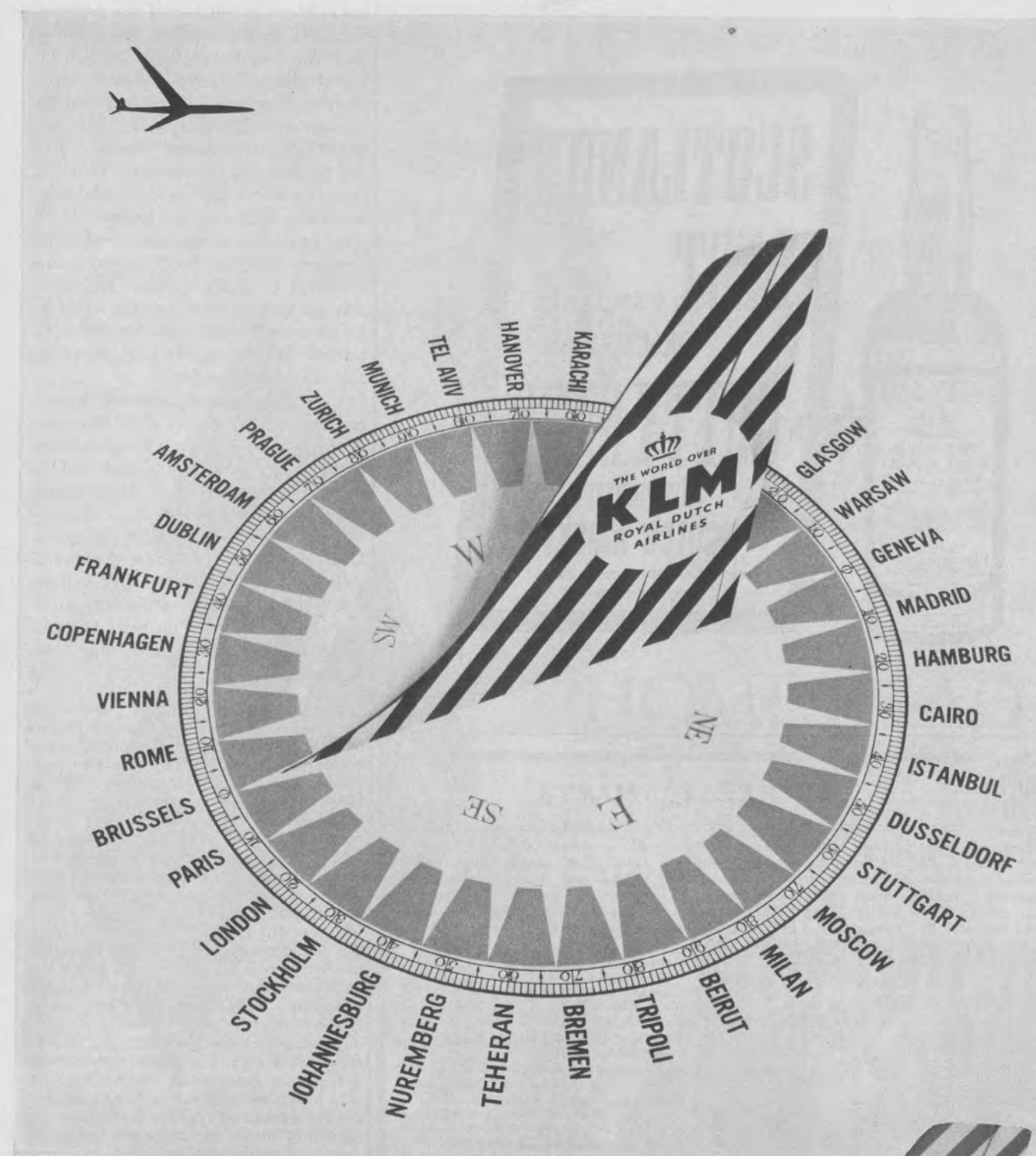
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"I could never get over the feeling, whenever I went to see him, that I ought to have my cap in my hand." And an American businessman in Scandinavia, recalling that he first saw Cabot at a Sibelius festival in Helsinki a number of years ago, recalls, "He was sitting with his head tilted up, his long nose in the air, his lips pursed, his mustache aquiver, and my first instinct was to sock him in the jaw. The more I came to know him, the more I realized he really wasn't the way he looked and acted, and the better I liked him. It was a strange thing, though—as we got to be good friends, I switched from calling him 'Mr. Cabot' to 'Sir,' and ended up with 'Mr. Ambassador.'"

The members of the Cabot clan, who, according to the Ambassador's wife, "are many, tight-knit, and passionate about each other," are his staunchest admirers but also his severest critics. His brother Thomas, who prefers sailing and mountain climbing to tennis, says, "Jack has struggled hard against both clumsiness and shyness, and thirty years of being in the public eye and being forced to make speeches have had an obvious impact. Even though he's not a finished speaker and often sounds bored, he gets through to his listeners, all right. He has a good sense of humor but often doesn't understand the sort of thing that lots of other people consider funny. He's always thoughtful and reflective, and I think he is gifted with shrewd insight when it comes to why and when men's minds are for you or against you." Being a notably successful analyst and interpreter of foreign developments—among his major accomplishments for the State Department may be listed his prediction, in 1947, that a break between Tito and Stalin not only was possible but perhaps ought to be promoted, and his carefully documented account of what was happening in Shanghai in 1948 that would cause the Kuomintang to lose China to the Communists—Cabot has grown so used to airing his views that he has been known to follow up his reports to Washington with long letters to members of his family in which he explains what he thinks not only about the country he happens to be in but also about countries where he has previously been or hasn't been yet. He was stationed in Guatemala in 1939, and when war broke out in Europe that September, he immediately began to write letters home fervently advocating American entrance at once on the side of the Allies, and warning of the disaster that he foresaw if this country remained neutral. His words are more effec-



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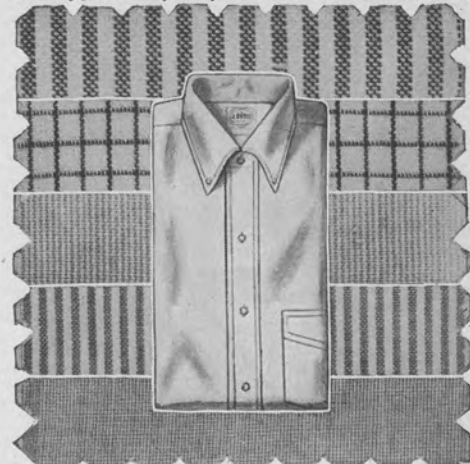
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tive on paper than when spoken at the conference table or in the drawing room. "Even in the bosom of his family, Jack can sound stuffy as hell when he starts talking," Ralph Bradley, a retired businessman who is married to Cabot's sister Eleanor, says. "You ask him 'Jack, what about this or that?' and he immediately mounts a rostrum, clears his throat, puts on his judicial wig, ties it to his left ear, and begins. He'll give you all the pros and cons of a situation, and then he'll come out and say what he really thinks. It's probably all part of clarifying the issues in his own mind, but it can be awfully protracted. Yet he's wonderfully objective, and that's his strength."

Cabot's analytical approach is not confined to assessments of the international situation; it also extends to the problems of being a diplomat and to the nature of diplomacy itself. Seven years ago, at a meeting of the Massachusetts State Federation of Women's Clubs, in Boston, he delivered a speech called "Why Diplomats Don't Behave Like Human Beings," which was afterward much quoted in the State Department, and which contained these passages:

I hope I will be able to show you that we don't behave as we do because we like to be stuffy. We often sound stuffy because we have learned that anything else may spoil the job we are trying to do. . . . When foreign affairs had not yet become a matter of crucial national interest, our diplomats used to be criticized for wearing striped pants and spats while they pushed cookies at pink tea parties. I haven't seen a pair of spats in our Service for over twenty years, and as for the rest of it, I hope there is a special corner reserved in the nether regions where in the hereafter our critics will be forced to attend all the social activities of which they so glibly complain. . . . Diplomatic problems might . . . be simpler if they were of the here today and gone tomorrow type, like the ordinary headache. Unhappily they seldom are. Nations may quickly forget the wrong they have done others, but they never forget the wrongs others have done them. . . . Decisions made, an imprudent act committed, precedents established, an indiscretion published even decades ago may arise today to plague the diplomat. Impatient citizens may inquire: Why didn't you do that? Why be so namby-pamby? Why don't you tell some of these foreign slickers off? They forget that every decision tends to point inexorably the path to the next. . . . Diplomats often do not have a choice between good and bad decisions. Many diplomatic decisions must be between what is bad and what is unthinkable. . . . In many diplomatic questions one is dealing primarily in imponderables—in rivalries, suspicions, jealousies, sensitivities, piques. . . . There is often no way of knowing precisely what the people you are dealing with are thinking, or what their real objectives are. . . . A diplo-



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mat... must seek to act wisely on the basis of his forecasts—and he must never forget to have his rubbers and his raincoat handy even when the diplomatic forecast is “fair.”... When a diplomat gets hit by critical mudballs, it is practically impossible for him to make a real reply.... Obviously, in a name-calling contest with his critics, a diplomat hasn’t a fair chance to get his story before the public.... He cannot betray confidences. He cannot reveal secret information, often obtained from secret sources. He cannot cackle in triumph over a good deal he has made, or his opposite number in another country will be on the spot, and he will pay plenty when he next tries to negotiate.

Notwithstanding Cabot’s dissertation on the restraints imposed upon a diplomat’s tongue, he has a reputation in the State Department for blunt speaking. “If he believes in something, he speaks up, and he doesn’t care where the chips fall,” one of his friends there says. Significantly, his candid talk to the ladies in Boston was made right after he had been eased out of his biggest job to date—that of Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs—and was in a state of diplomatic limbo, with his appointment as Ambassador to Sweden still unconfirmed. In the same speech, by obvious implications, he criticized Senator Joseph McCarthy, who was then riding high as a foe of Communists and was not exactly the safest target for a Foreign Service man to go after. Cabot’s admirers believe that he could not have spoken otherwise—that his frankness is not an acquired characteristic but a family trait.

CABOT was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on December 11, 1901. He had two brothers (the elder, James, died in 1930) and one sister, all older than he. “Jack was very much the youngest of the family—an inward-turning boy who at the age of four already had an uncanny knowledge of geography,” his sister recalls. “He was always waking me up in the middle of the night to ask if I knew the depth of the Mozambique Channel, or something equally ridiculous.” Cabot’s mother was the late Maria Moors Cabot, in whose name and memory, at his instigation, his father has endowed several journalism prizes awarded annually by Columbia University for the promotion of friendship between Latin America and the United States. A gracious, gentle woman, Mrs. Cabot liked to ride around town in her electric car wearing a hat of ostrich plumes, and in the big



family home she enjoyed showing off to her guests her son’s surprising familiarity with remote spots on the globe. Her husband was a far more formidable character. An ardent and sometimes domineering ascetic who abominated smoking and drinking—and still does—he wouldn’t permit either in his house. Indeed, as a prominent member of the New England Watch and Ward Society, he crusaded vigorously against vice in all its forms, which for him included cardplaying. “Growing up as the son of a man who rides forth against sin is an experience you don’t forget,” Cabot’s brother Thomas says. “Jack’s memory of it may be a little blurred, though, because he was out from under Father’s influence more. He’s never smoked much, but though he’s not what you’d call a drinker, I’d say by now he’s pretty used to those two highballs before dinner.” Cabot *père*, for all his idiosyncrasies, has been in many respects a most remarkable man, who did not limit his activities to crusading against Bostonian corruption, or even to building up a successful business. One of the earliest advocates of aviation in America, he learned to fly at the age of fifty-two and, as a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve, piloted his Burgess-Dunne seaplane on patrol around Boston Harbor during the First World War.

In comparison to all this, anything the Cabot sons did was very likely to seem pale—at least, in the beginning. Certainly the youngest Cabot didn’t get off to a brilliant start. A schoolmate of his at Browne & Nichols, a private preparatory school in Cambridge, remembers him as “an awkward, pudgy kid who was so unkempt that some of us took soap and water one day and washed his face and hands.” Cabot may not have made much of a mark at school, but he showed at least one sign of breaking away from the sobering influence of his father: he raided some nearby celery patches with a friend, Robert Bradford, who later became Governor of Massachusetts. Possibly in another attempt to escape, he applied for Annapolis, but when he was accepted, he changed his mind, and, in the fall of 1919, duly entered Harvard. Everyone in Cabot’s family agrees that he “matured late,” and it wasn’t until his college years that he began to spruce up and wonder what was going to become of him, since he had already decided he didn’t want to spend his life promoting the fortunes of



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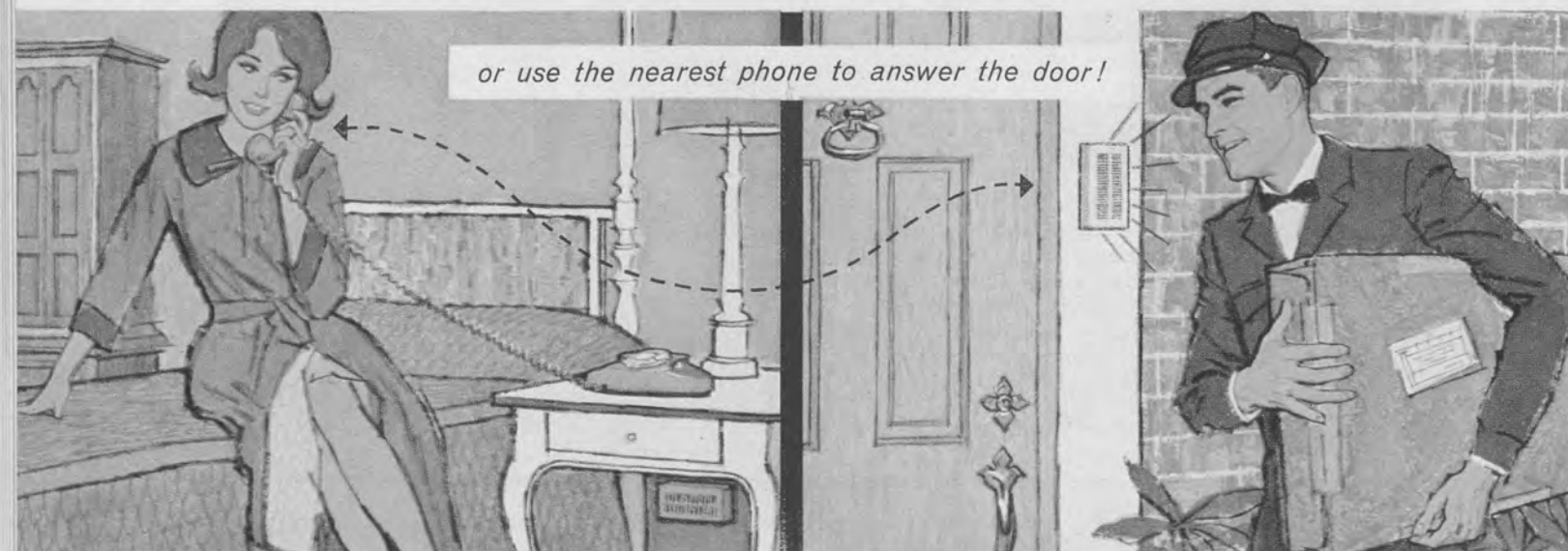
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carbon black. He studied hard at Harvard, and did well, but he doesn't seem to have made any positive impression on his classmates there, either. "We never thought he'd be more than the nice son of an extraordinary father," one of them said recently. Cabot himself isn't sure exactly when he decided to enter the Foreign Service. "I wanted to be different," he says, "and I suppose the fact that no Cabot had ever chosen statecraft as a profession had something to do with it. Basically, though, I think I just fell into it—like stepping on a slippery rock and falling into the water. Two years at Oxford, after Harvard, did the trick, I guess. I grew a mustache and became interested in modern history, so I decided, I suppose, to become part of it." Years later, in a Harvard anniversary classbook, Cabot wrote, with a trace of diplomatic irony: "I joined one of those dying professions in 1926; the telephone and the like had doomed it, and I wore out my striped pants several years ago trying ever more breathlessly to keep up with it. I entered the Foreign Service October 1, 1926, spent six months in Foreign Service school, and then, since I was studying French and knew no Spanish, was naturally sent as vice-consul to Lima, Peru."

Cabot has described his first post as "a vice-consul's dream." He was one of "three Foreign Service colts in training" there, he says, adding, "We were young and frisky and out to save the world. So we saved young sailors who had drunk too much and were interested in sowing their oats, as we were. I brought along a little Buick roadster and we used to go tearing up into the Andes exploring new roads that had just opened up." When he wasn't rescuing befuddled mariners or roaring about in his Buick, he issued visas, validated passports, wrote commercial reports, and performed the other routine chores that are the lot of a Foreign Service colt.

After eighteen carefree months in Peru, Cabot was transferred to the Dominican Republic, then called Santo Domingo, where he found himself in the middle of a musical-comedy political situation. Rafael Trujillo, who was then head of the National Guard, had engineered things in such a way that a garrison under his command in the city of Santiago was fomenting a revolution and a garrison under his command in the city of Santo Domingo (now Ciudad Trujillo) was opposing it. In this way, Trujillo, who actually favored the revolution, managed not to show his hand. Cabot darted back and forth be-



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tween the two cities, acting as a delaying diplomatic force of one, and succeeded in keeping the garrisons from clashing until the tension had subsided somewhat. "The Santiago garrison finally marched on Santo Domingo," Cabot says, "but by then the atmosphere had calmed down a bit. Even though there was a certain amount of shooting, it wasn't as serious as it might have been earlier, when the crowds were out and angry."

In December of 1930, having helped for the moment to preserve the peace in Santo Domingo, Cabot was sent as third secretary to the American Embassy in Mexico City, where he met his future wife. Her father, Herbert Lewis, had been a mining man and a real-estate operator there until his death, in 1922. After attending Vassar and the Sorbonne, Elizabeth Lewis had returned to Mexico City to become social secretary to the current Ambassador, J. Reuben Clark, and his wife. She and Cabot were married in Mexico City on April 2, 1932. Cabot's family in Boston had been a trifle shocked to learn that he had become engaged before they were given an opportunity to look the girl over, and the fact that they still had not seen her when he married her did nothing to reassure them, but they comforted themselves by observing that he was thirty years old, so it was about time. After the wedding, the bride and groom sailed for France, where they took a motor trip and Cabot introduced his wife to the joys of wandering about in old churches—a hobby of his that has persisted to this day.

Mrs. Cabot has the reputation in the Foreign Service of being the perfect diplomat's wife. Many career men have been held back, and some have even resigned from the service, because their wives proved unable to stand the strain of perpetual transfers from one strange city to another, and of the never-ending social obligations they are burdened with. Mrs. Cabot says, "The important thing for a boy in the Foreign Service is to catch the right girl early enough and ask her, 'Do you think you could stand this?' If she thinks she can, and she *can*, it'll be fine. It's a lovely life, you know, but it's important to start young and bend with the years, as we did. You see beautiful things, and you're always meeting old friends and making new ones wherever you go. It's a tight little society, this family of diplomats. In a way, it was much better years ago, when we had to find our own houses, and go into the market place to do our own shopping, and depended on our longer-



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established neighbors, whether they were diplomats or not, for help. We learned by osmosis. Now we have American residences and American commissaries, and we all live on top of each other too much. There isn't nearly the fun and adventure there used to be."

THE Cabots had hoped to return to Mexico after their honeymoon, but even before they sailed for France, Cabot got word that he had been transferred to Guatemala. Then, the day before the couple were scheduled to leave Paris for the new post, he received a cable informing him that he was being sent to Brazil instead. "I handed Elizabeth a cognac before I told her, and that's been the signal for startling news ever since," Cabot says. In Brazil, the Cabots established their first home, and their first two children were born there—Marjorie Moors Cabot, who is now twenty-eight and married to a Mexican public servant, and John Godfrey Lowell Cabot, a twenty-six-year-old graduate of the Harvard Business School, who works for the Cabot Corporation. The Cabots have two other children—Lewis Pickering Cabot, twenty-three and a student at Harvard, who was born in The Hague, and Elizabeth Tracy Cabot, eighteen and a student at Vassar, who was born in Washington.

It was also in Brazil that Cabot learned how to be a mobile diplomat. When the Cabots arrived in Rio, the Ambassador was an old-timer named Edwin Morgan, who had been there since 1912. He had not only created excellent relations between Brazil and the United States but become something of a power in the country. "Morgan was one of the most unusual men I've ever met," Cabot says. "Everyone confided in him. He seldom bothered to report to Washington. The only trouble was that since he did everything himself, he wanted the rest of us to keep out of his way. The night we arrived in Rio, we attended a party at the Embassy, and when I walked into the office the next morning, Morgan roared, 'What are you doing here?' I thought it was the end of my career. Then he said that his orders to me were to go around and meet people, and not to come back until I could tell him something about Brazil that he didn't know. Over the succeeding months—except now and then when I'd slink into the Embassy to help out with some paperwork—my wife and I wandered all over Brazil. It was wonderful not to live in a glass house. The minute any Bra-



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zilian said, 'Come upcountry with me,' we jumped at the chance. We took a three-week trip down the Paraná River to Paraguay in a dinky little river boat, stopping at every river town. The food was bad, but we didn't care. When I got back to Rio after that jaunt, Morgan smiled at me for the first time."

Morgan retired in the spring of 1933 but remained in Brazil as a private citizen. "After he and his successor, Hugh Gibson, had taken one look at each other, they decided to dislike each other cordially," Cabot recalls. "Since Morgan had a lot more contacts there than Gibson had, he became a kind of *alter* ambassador, and all of us at the Embassy were caught in the middle. It couldn't have been more embarrassing. The broken crockery was all over the place." When Morgan died, in 1934, things were more placid. Cabot now spent his time mostly at his desk, busy with such mundane matters as analyzing the Brazilian budget, working out details of the Brazilian debt settlement with the United States, and negotiating on tariffs. Still, Rio in the early thirties, the Cabots agree, was "one of the happy hunting grounds of prewar living." Carnivals lasted four days and four nights, and became gay costume parties during which the whole population, including the diplomatic colony, mingled on the Avenida and danced.

In 1936, after four Latin-American assignments in a row, Cabot got his first professional taste of Europe when he was sent to The Hague as second secretary. Life was now growing much more serious; he arrived in Holland just after the German reoccupation of the Rhineland and left just before Munich. Watching the interplay of forces, Cabot reported extensively to Washington on the political picture—the Dutch Nazi Party was a nuisance—and on tax and trade matters that were affected by the touchy monetary situation, but he also found time to play in several tennis tournaments. The Hague was a pretty staid place, and the Cabots were looked upon as a gay young couple from another world, who knew how to throw good parties and make exotic Latin drinks. "I can still see Queen Wilhelmina at a wedding party for one of her daughters, sailing across the room like a full-rigged ship for another one of our rum cocktails," Cabot says. "But the light moments were getting fewer and fewer."

In the late summer of 1938, Cabot was sent to Stockholm for what he thought would be a few weeks of filling in for someone else; it turned out to be

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a six-month stint. As the ranking secretary of the Stockholm Embassy, he kept reporting on the growing war menace, and as a tennis enthusiast he played against the late King Gustavus V in doubles matches. "Since the King had a former Davis Cup star for a partner, I wasn't on the winning side very often," he says. "Anyway, it was good protocol to lose." By this time, Cabot had discovered the existence of a global diplomatic set, whose members would keep bumping into each other as they travelled about the world. "Diplomats are more aware than most people of the value of carefully exchanged confidences," he says. "You've got to give in order to get, of course, and be very discreet in your indiscretions, but if you're careful, you'll find in the long run that you get more than you reveal." In Stockholm, for example, Cabot ran across a diplomat from a Latin-American country whom he had known for some time, and this man passed on to him a detailed account of how the Nazis were getting a large amount of oil out of Mexico. He relayed the story to Washington and was commended for it. However, it didn't cause nearly the sensation around the Department that another of his reports did—a little essay on Swedish nudist magazines, accompanied by some samples, that he sent home as part of a sociological survey. "It's easily the most widely read report in my dossier," Cabot says.

In the spring of 1939, Cabot once again received word that he was being transferred to Guatemala. This time, the transfer went through, and he remained in that country for two years. At that time, Guatemala was governed by the dictator Jorge Ubico Castañeda, and when war broke out in Europe, Washington feared that, because of the existence of a powerful Guatemalan German colony, he would prove to be pro-Nazi. "I wasn't convinced this would necessarily happen," Cabot says. "There's one thing a dictator wants to be, and that's master in his own house. Well, in time, Ubico let us know that he was fed up with the Nazis in his midst and was willing to hand them over to us. We didn't give him a chance to change his mind. Within forty-eight hours, we had dispatched a ship to collect them. Ubico was a bit taken aback at our promptness, but he stuck to his word and rounded up a hundred Nazis, and we carted them off for internment. It was that sort of operation that broke the back of the Nazi Fifth Column in Central and South America."

Cabot passed the war years in Wash-



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ington, first as Assistant Chief of the Division of American Republics, then as Chief of the Division of Caribbean and Central American Affairs. They were rewarding years in some respects, but in others they were as frustrating as any in his career. Specifically, he became beyond doubt the most unsuccessful road builder in the government's history. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, when the Army was afraid that the Japanese might try to seize Lower California, it wanted a thousand-mile highway built from the Mexican border down to the tip of Lower California. Cabot was put in charge of this project. He went ahead and made all the necessary arrangements, and then, just as the digging was about to get under way, the Army decided that the pressure was off and the road wasn't necessary. "We had to apologize to the Mexicans," Cabot says. "Fortunately, they were very nice about it." When the German submarine campaign was at its height, the Army demanded a fifteen-hundred-mile road from northern Guatemala to the Canal Zone. "At the last minute, the Army backed out on that one, too," Cabot recalls. "Once again, there was considerable explaining to do." Still another Cabot project that the Army nipped in the bud had to do with quinine. When the Asian supply was cut off by the Japanese, he began negotiations with several Central American countries to grow the stuff, but then Atabrine came along and the Army called the deal off. He made the best of the fiasco by arranging to have Manila hemp grown in Costa Rica and Honduras, and rubber in Guatemala, which also agreed to export mahogany for PT boats. "There were times when I felt I was more of a produce-and-marketing man than a diplomat," he says today.

In 1944, Cabot attended the Dumbarton Oaks Conference as an adviser on Latin-American affairs, and shortly afterward he was senior adviser at the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, in Mexico City, where the Act of Chapultepec, setting up a system of hemispheric defense, was proclaimed. He then attended the San Francisco Conference, again as an adviser on Latin-American affairs, and while there he received word that he had been appointed as Counsellor of Embassy at Buenos Aires. In his autobiographical sketch for Harvard, he notes that the appointment came through "just as the dead cats were really beginning to fly;" that is, when the big fight between Ambassador Spruille Braden and Juan Perón, the Argentine

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dictator, was starting. At the time, Perón was widely accused of harboring Nazis, and Braden set out not only to clean up the Nazi situation but to oppose the Perón regime and encourage its domestic enemies. "Braden soon discovered that Perón had a good many more Nazi friends than we supposed and had no intention of getting rid of them at our behest," Cabot explained recently. "Naturally, I never held any brief for Perón, but it's my belief that the moment we do anything to antagonize a ruling faction, especially in Latin America, we just help keep it in power, and I don't think Perón would have lasted as long as he did if Braden hadn't kicked up such a fuss. Yet, as I look back on it, it was one of the most interesting things I've seen, because Braden was so forceful and magnetic that by breaking all the rules he almost won the hand."

In the late summer of 1945, after thoroughly antagonizing Perón, Braden went home to become Assistant Secretary of State for American Republic Affairs, and Cabot found himself temporarily in charge. He remained chargé d'affaires in Buenos Aires for eight months, during which the Perón and the anti-Perón forces were fighting it out. "There I was," he recalls, "having to implement a policy of forcing the issue that I didn't altogether believe in myself, with the situation getting more out of hand all the time. Scarcely a day passed without a riot. The odor of tear gas was ubiquitous. In October, there was a brief revolution, which for a while looked as if it might end Perón's career, but unfortunately the anti-Peronistas missed the boat. I remember trying to persuade them to get a wiggle on, but they simply lacked sufficient leadership. Perón quickly staged a counter-Putsch and was back in power within ten days, producing a new situation, in which it was pretty clear that a violent reaction against American interference had set in. I started trying to impress this on Washington. As a matter of fact, we were making considerable progress toward the original Braden goal of trying to get rid of Nazi influence in business and cultural circles, and had even managed to get some dangerous Nazis deported, so it was embarrassing to have the State Department continue its broadsides against Perón. It's true that the Argentinians were working both sides of the street, but they had actually begun to round up Nazi spies. Perón won overwhelmingly in the elections of February, 1946, and, again, that altered the picture consider-



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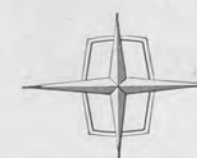
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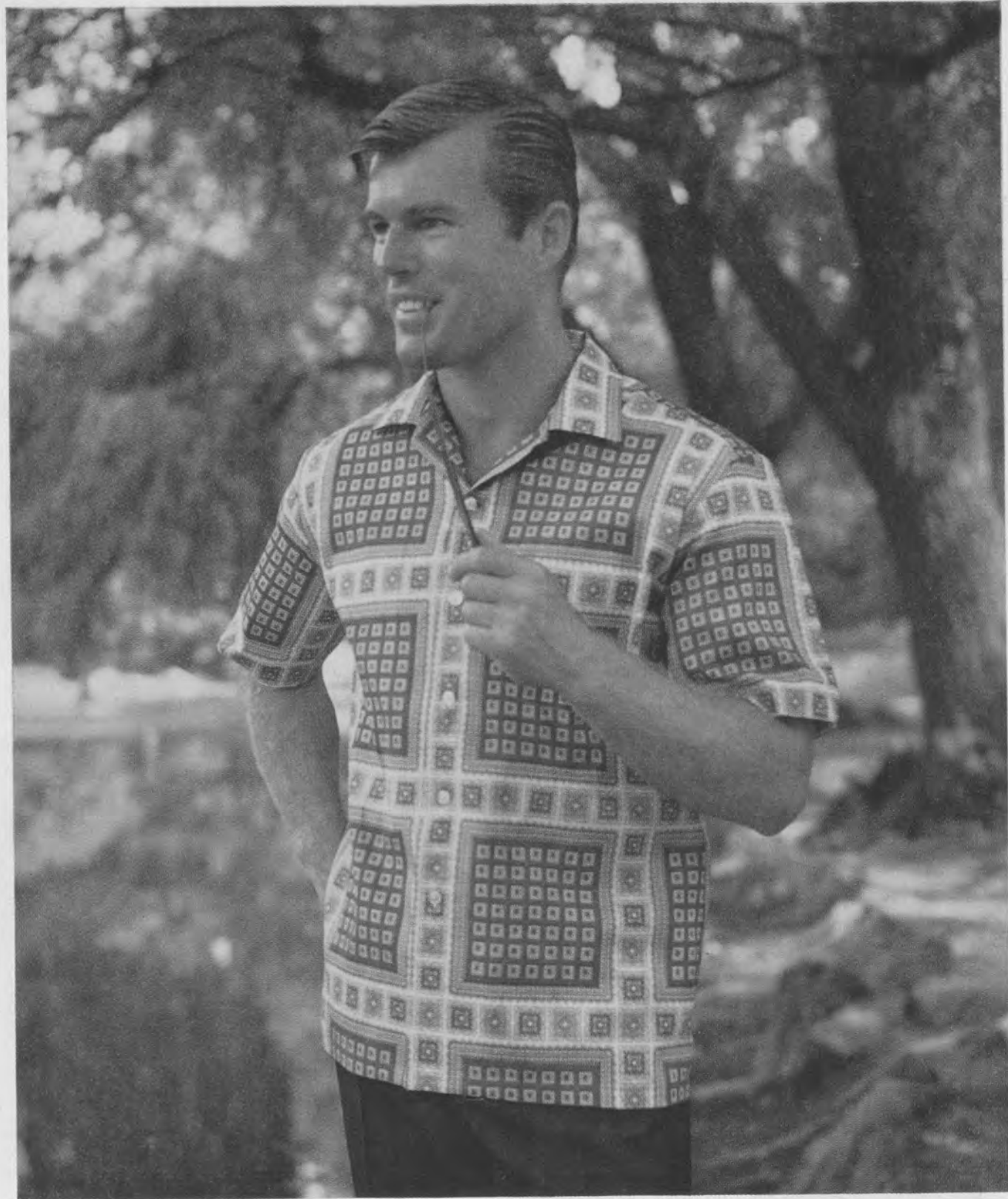
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ably. I had to make the most difficult decision of my career, from the personal standpoint. Having strongly opposed the degree of our involvement in Argentine affairs, I thought at first that I must either go along quietly with Washington's strong anti-Perón policy or resign and have my say publicly. Then I came to the conclusion that either course was cowardly and that I would do better to stay on and express my views officially, even if I eventually got thrown out of the Department. Happily—though I didn't know this until later—there were a lot of far more influential men than myself back home who had come to feel as I did."

The clouds began to lift in April, 1946, when George Messersmith was appointed as the new American Ambassador to Argentina. "I first read about his appointment in the Argentine press," Cabot recalls. "It was somewhat awkward to get the news that way and to have to dash out and get an *agrément* for Messersmith to enter Argentina, but luckily my relations with Perón's Foreign Minister, Juan Cooke, had always been good, and I got a quick O.K. When Messersmith arrived, he promptly began reversing Braden's policy, and he went at it so hard that by the time I left Buenos Aires, two months later, I thought he had gone too far in the opposite direction. But I didn't try to make an issue of it, as I'd done with Braden."

Almost immediately, Cabot was plunged into another quagmire, for in June of 1946 he was appointed chargé d'affaires in Belgrade. "You must remember that Tito was still Stalin's fair-haired boy then," he said recently. "There were some signs of trouble brewing, though, and it seemed to me that the Yugoslavs might eventually have a chance to break loose. If they did, it was essential for them to



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know that they'd find our door open. This was the basic principle I adopted, and one of my last reports from Belgrade, in July of 1947, was a long one analyzing the real possibilities of a split and pointing out how we could encourage it. I might add that it was much more favorably regarded by the Department a year later than it was when I wrote it. By that time the split had taken place." In Yugoslavia, Cabot had less difficulty making contact with Tito than with the people. "In the end, my old way of travelling around the countryside proved best, although, of course, that wasn't so easy to do then," he recalls. "Once Elizabeth and I were able to get out of Belgrade, we found many of the people quite friendly. I remember one time we sent a couple of jeeps down to the Bulgarian border, and followed along by train to pick them up at Niš and motor clear across Yugoslavia. The Secret Police, naturally, trailed us all the way back, but I'm sure they had to report a most alarming lack of subversive activities. They'd catch up with us at every stop—the dust of our jeeps made them look as if they'd been dumped into a flour barrel—and it must have been pretty discouraging to find, each time, that we were only looking at another monastery."

In Belgrade, plenty of diplomatic incidents arose to plague Cabot, among them the shooting down of two American transport planes over Yugoslavia, but the post was a sinecure compared to his next one. The wives of diplomats engage even more diligently than the diplomats themselves in an almost daily guessing game about where they will be sent next. One day in late 1947, after the Cabots had returned to Washington from Belgrade, Mrs. Cabot invited some Foreign Service wives to lunch, and throughout the meal they kept badgering her with questions about her next destination. "One thing I can tell you—we're *not* going to Shanghai," she said at last, since this seemed to her the most unlikely spot of all for her husband. An hour later, Cabot handed her a glass of cognac and told her the news: he was going to Shanghai, as consul general. Mrs. Cabot downed the cognac and then, feeling a little foolish, called her luncheon companions. When the Cabots arrived in Shanghai, early in 1948, the Communists were sweeping China, and the city was being plagued by a wave of anti-American demonstrations—not all of them Communist-led by any means. Cabot at once began making speeches in an effort to counteract what he considered the people's

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"preposterous misconceptions" about the United States and its policies toward China and toward Asia in general. These talks were directed partly at the Kuomintang, which was complaining bitterly—and, Cabot still believes, unjustifiably—that it was not receiving sufficient aid from the United States, and partly at the Communists and their sympathizers. Cabot couldn't do much of his usual travelling around the countryside, but he made up for it by hours of wandering through Shanghai and observing the people. He feels—and quite a few Foreign Service men agree with him—that a series of reports he filed on the city are among the best he ever wrote. "I remember how it disturbed me to be living in one of those enormous houses, with acres of useless lawn, right in the middle of the city," he recalls. "You can imagine what the families huddled in shanties around our walls could have grown on all that land. My first look at the town was in January, when it was cold and damp, and naked babies were constantly being found frozen in the streets. It was a horrifying business. The whole social structure was termite-ridden. Corruption was universal, and, what was worse, not even the foreign colony seemed to give a damn. All the people I encountered—businessmen particularly—appeared to think that a Communist victory was not only inevitable but to be welcomed, after their long, frustrating experience with the Kuomintang."

By the end of 1948, Cabot was busy preparing to evacuate some four thousand Americans from Shanghai, and during the next few months about two-thirds of the American colony was moved out. The Communists marched into the city on May 25, 1949. Shortly before they arrived, the Consulate General had moved into the Glenn Line Building, on the Bund, which the United States Navy had previously tenanted, and as the Reds came sniping down the Bund, Cabot and most of his staff, which then numbered about eighty, watched from the roof of the building, shielding themselves behind a stone parapet. After a while, deciding that the fire was getting too heavy, Cabot threw himself flat on the surface of the roof, and, followed by those who felt as he did, inched himself out of range. "Even while crawling, he showed great self-possession," one of his Shanghai staff has recalled.

Cabot stayed on for two months after the Communists occupied Shanghai, and then left only because he was suffering a severe attack of dysentery. He

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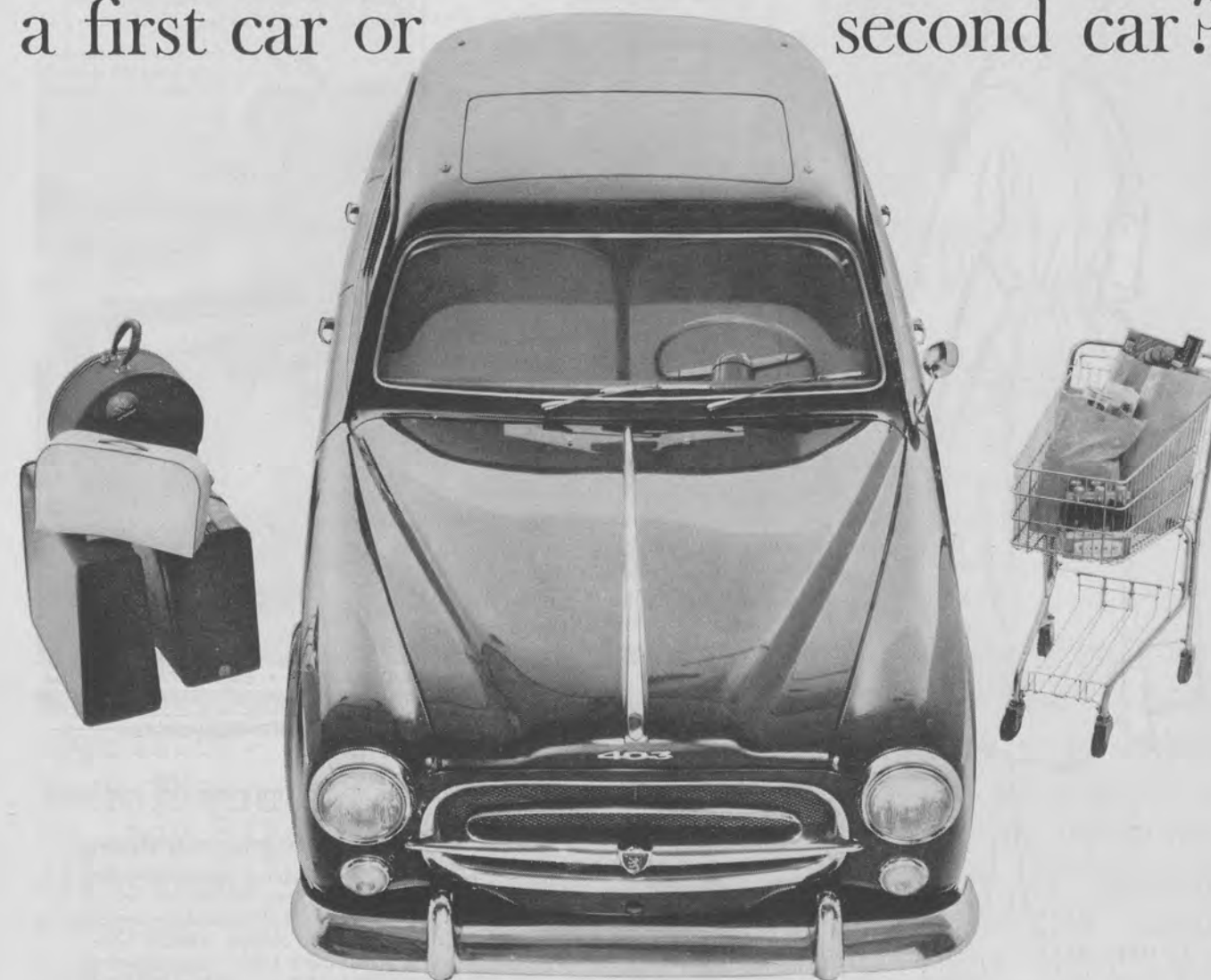
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regards those two months as his worst experience in the Foreign Service. "As soon as it became evident that Washington wasn't going to recognize the new regime, the Communists really turned on us," he says. "They were determined to be as tough and nasty as they could." Partly to keep up appearances and partly to relax, Cabot continued to play tennis and to entertain whenever he wasn't feeling too ill. One evening, a mob of Chinese who had formerly been employed by the United States Navy besieged the Consulate General, demanding back pay. "Cabot exhibited great aplomb in dealing with them," an assistant recalls. "He instructed all of us to put our hands in our pockets, as a show of passive resistance, and told the demonstrators quietly that this was no way to settle things. After that, they hung around the building for a while, and we decided not to try to break through their ranks and get back to our living quarters." Cabot looks back on the affair philosophically. "The building was blockaded for seven or eight hours," he says, "but we had food and water and light and some whiskey, so it wasn't terribly serious. Finally, after we had put up cots for the night, it began to rain, and the crowd got discouraged. That's the way history is usually written, you know."

In July, Cabot flew out of Shanghai with the Ambassador, John Leighton Stuart. His experiences had convinced him that a tour of duty in a Communist country is a must for any career man, and on returning home, where he was temporarily attached to the United States Delegation to the United Nations, he did a good bit of speaking on China. As usual, he spoke with more candor than many diplomats would choose to display. He had no doubts that China's new conquerors were "true, fanatical, indoctrinated Communists," but he kept emphasizing that the Kuomintang could blame its own corruption and intrigues, and not the lack of sufficient American aid, for the loss of China. His opinions were hardly fashionable at the time, but although many of the old China hands who were expressing similar ideas resigned or were forced out of the State Department in those days, he escaped their fate, probably because, after a mere eighteen months in the Orient, he was not regarded as one of them. "The chances are that if he'd been in China a while longer he'd have got into the same sort of trouble," one of his friends in the Department says. "But one thing is sure—that wouldn't have stopped

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Jack from saying exactly what he thought."

THROUGH his years in the Foreign Service, Cabot had steadily advanced in rank, and shortly after his return from Shanghai he was promoted to the position of Career Minister. Since then, except for another period of service in Washington, he has been in charge of embassies or legations in four countries. The first of them was Finland, which presented a sharp contrast to China, though the Communist problem existed there, too, about twenty per cent of the population having voted for the Party's candidates. Cabot conceived the idea of making informal appearances before labor groups as a means of counteracting Communist influence. "It was obvious that a certain amount of Communist mud would stick to the average workman unless he got enough ideas from the other side to wash it off," he says. Accordingly, in the summer of 1950 he and a young secretary at the legation who spoke Finnish took to the road and met with various groups at halls throughout the country, making it clear from the start that they were there to answer questions. The Finns had plenty of questions to ask, and the subjects they were particularly interested in were the American attitude toward the Korean War, the nature of the Social Security program in the United States, and the Negro problem. "We appeared at about a dozen meetings," Cabot recalls, "and there was no doubt that they went over well, because the Finns kept asking for more." Cabot remembers his Finnish assignment with pleasure, and not only for professional reasons. While he was there, he was introduced to the *sauna*—a small concrete bath chamber heated by red-hot rocks—and when he returned to the United States, he spent three thousand dollars installing one on the grounds of his Massachusetts summer home. That is one possession the Cabots have not attempted to carry around with them.

In September of 1952, Cabot was appointed Ambassador to Pakistan, but he never got there. The change of administration in Washington kept him waiting in the capital for five months, dividing his time between an empty office and the Metropolitan, Chevy Chase, and University Clubs. Then, unexpectedly, he was offered the Assistant Secretaryship for Inter-American Affairs, an important post that goes sometimes to career men and sometimes to political appointees. Cabot was glad to have a crack at the job. He felt



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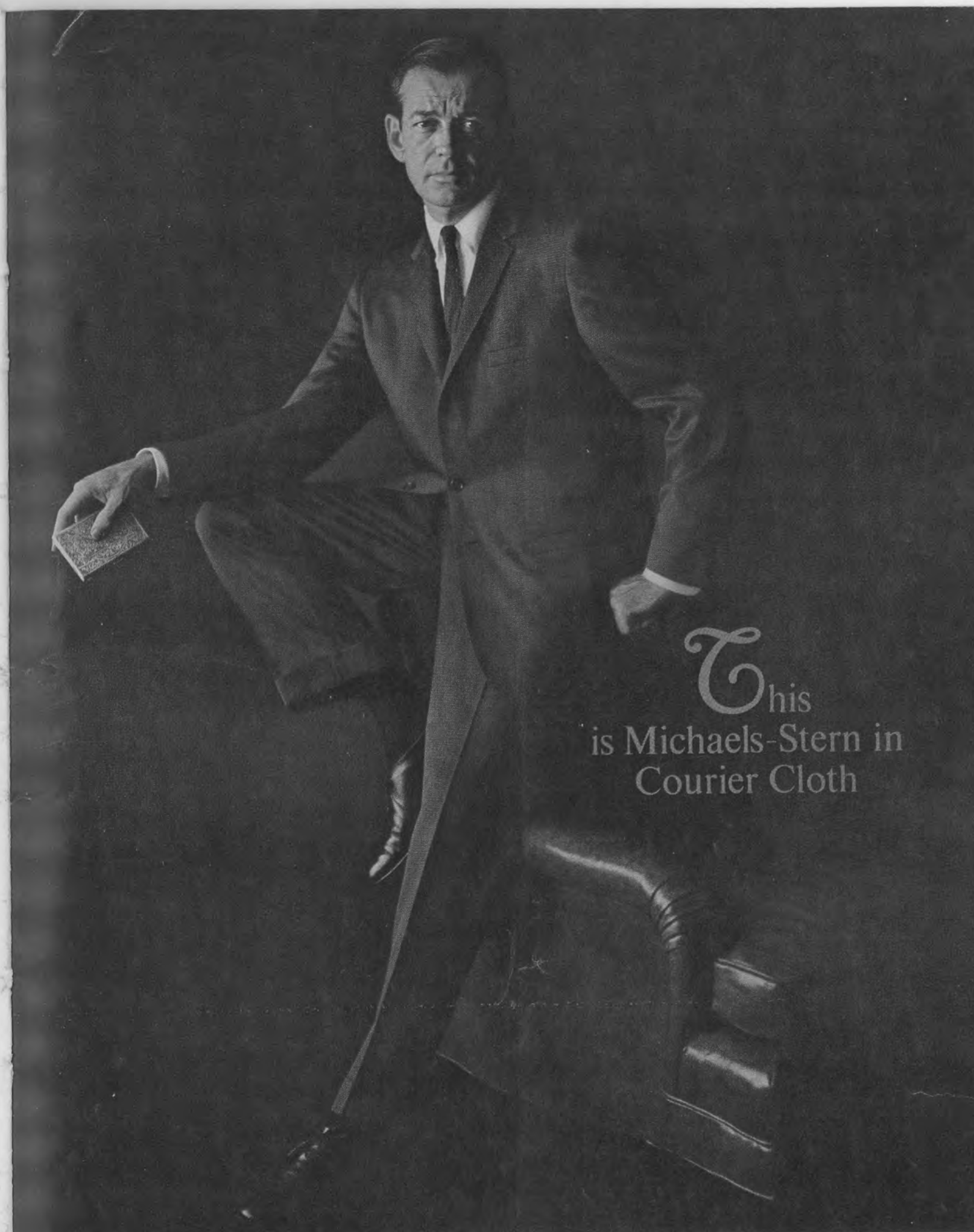
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that the United States had tended to neglect Latin America since the war and that this indifference was undermining its relations with the peoples of that continent. Soon after he took over his new post, he went on a month-long trip through eleven nations of Central and South America, but it was not an overwhelming success from the public-relations standpoint. He had to deal almost exclusively with officialdom, and, with his taste and capacity for mingling thus thwarted, he assumed a protective armor of stiff formality. The one time he loosened up was in the Dominican Republic, and there he ran afoul of Trujillo. At a private dinner party of American businessmen, he diverted his guests by telling them stories of his experiences with the fledgling dictator of twenty-five years before. The tales got back to Trujillo, who was furious and, in an effort to embarrass Cabot publicly, tried to represent him as a pro-Communist. The State Department knew better, but it was not pleased at having one of its high officers get into a row with the dictator. Upon his return, Cabot irritated the government in other ways. He declared that the United States should establish correct relations with certain Latin-American nations whether it approved of their governments or not, and on the question of economic assistance he clashed with Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey and others in the administration who were trying to retrench. In March, 1954, he was asked to resign. He submitted his resignation in an odd kind of *mea-culpa* letter to Secretary of State Dulles. "I have found it a handicap that my experience has been predominantly in the foreign political field," he wrote, "whereas the problems [of the job] are largely in the foreign economic and financial fields, and their solution requires extensive contacts in the domestic political field."

Cabot's resignation was accepted, and soon afterward he was appointed Ambassador to Sweden. The American press wasn't altogether kind to him when he went to Stockholm. "CABOT SAYS HE'S INCOMPETENT FOR ONE JOB, GETS ANOTHER," one headline read. However, the Swedes, who are rather choosy about the kind of ambassadors they get, didn't seem to mind on learning that their new one was coming to them under a cloud. "He's a full-blooded American, anyway," a Swedish editor wrote, "and not just someone of Scandinavian descent with a yen to see the old country." Cabot's previous short tour in Sweden appar-



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ently qualified him further in Swedish eyes, for another Swedish editor reported, "He knows a great deal about Swedish glass and sailing." Today, it is generally conceded in both Washington and Stockholm that Cabot proved to be one of this country's most effective and popular ambassadors to Sweden, and his practice of having give-and-take chats with the workers had a lot to do with it. "When I arrived in Sweden, there was a good deal of criticism of the United States in the air—a feeling that our foreign policy was somewhat flighty," he recalls. "A lot was being said about McCarthyism and our racial policies. The Communists were pretty noisy. If they drip poison steadily, a certain amount seeps in, and I set about trying to administer an antidote instead of just shuffling papers at my desk."

In his three years in Sweden, Cabot made about sixty appearances at union halls. His flat, nasal New England voice struck the reserved Swedes as just right, and they liked his manner of responding to their questions about American life, though to an American he might have sounded rather as if he were conducting a Sunday-school class back home. Perhaps the most significant proof of Cabot's success in Sweden was the fact that the Russians became more and more disturbed about him. His influence was publicly recognized when a group of students called at the Soviet Embassy and demanded that someone there answer their questions, the way the American Ambassador was doing; eventually, a few anonymous written answers to queries were sent out by a messenger, making it clear who had won the verbal battle. Cabot was transferred to Colombia in the spring of 1957, and if the Russians were glad to see him leave, the Swedes were not; in fact, Swedish journalists suggested pointedly that his next post wasn't nearly important enough for him.

If Cabot was inclined to agree, he maintained a diplomatic silence. When he arrived in Colombia, a shaky coalition government had just been set up by a group of military leaders who had overthrown a dictator, and during the following year or so the new regime had to ward off two attempted coups. There was nothing much that Cabot could do about the revolutionary bullets, except to dodge them, but he could and did act on the economic front. A decade of hinterland fighting and banditry had shattered the Colombian economy, and before Cabot returned to Washington in the spring of 1959, for what he then

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expected would be only a leave, he helped negotiate a substantial loan to Colombia and arranged a large shipment of surplus food from the United States.

Suddenly ordered to Rio instead of back to Bogotá, Cabot found an even more critical situation to contend with. "Brazil was like a jilted woman," he says. "The Brazilians are a sensitive and sentimental people. Traditionally, over a century and a half, we have always had very close relations, and I found them craving attention, which we hadn't lately been giving them." In fact, the United States had particularly annoyed Brazil by approving of the International Monetary Fund's rejection of a Brazilian request for a loan, on the ground that Brazil's financial structure was badly in need of reform. Cabot's first job was to soothe the Brazilians' ruffled feelings, and he made a point of reassuring the government of our continuing willingness to assist its economic recovery. When Brazil produced an unusually large coffee crop last year, the United States bought half of it, which improved the situation immeasurably. Cabot is vastly encouraged by recent developments. The new Quadros regime has begun to take firm steps to stabilize the currency and to stop inflation, and the United States, in the waning days of the Eisenhower administration and in the first days of the Kennedy administration, took a step that Cabot had been urging for years: last September, at a conference in Bogotá, the United States decided to put its program for social and economic aid to Latin America on a broad, long-range basis, and pledged half a billion dollars, as a starter, toward Latin-American land reform, low-cost housing, health, and education. The program is now being heartily pressed by President Kennedy and is up before Congress; if it is approved, as it undoubtedly will be, Brazil's share of the aid is bound to be considerable. This prospect delights Cabot, especially since it may help counteract Brazil's present tendency to establish closer economic and political ties with the Communist bloc.

In his day-to-day dealings with the Brazilians, Cabot continues to operate on the theory that an ambassador should be seen and heard. Apart from his regular appearances before commercial and labor groups, he has had informal discussions with many Brazilians, particularly with students, who have questioned him sharply about Washington's policy toward Fidel Castro, about ending the Cold War, and about such matters as the execution of Caryl Chessman; the Ambassador has answered the



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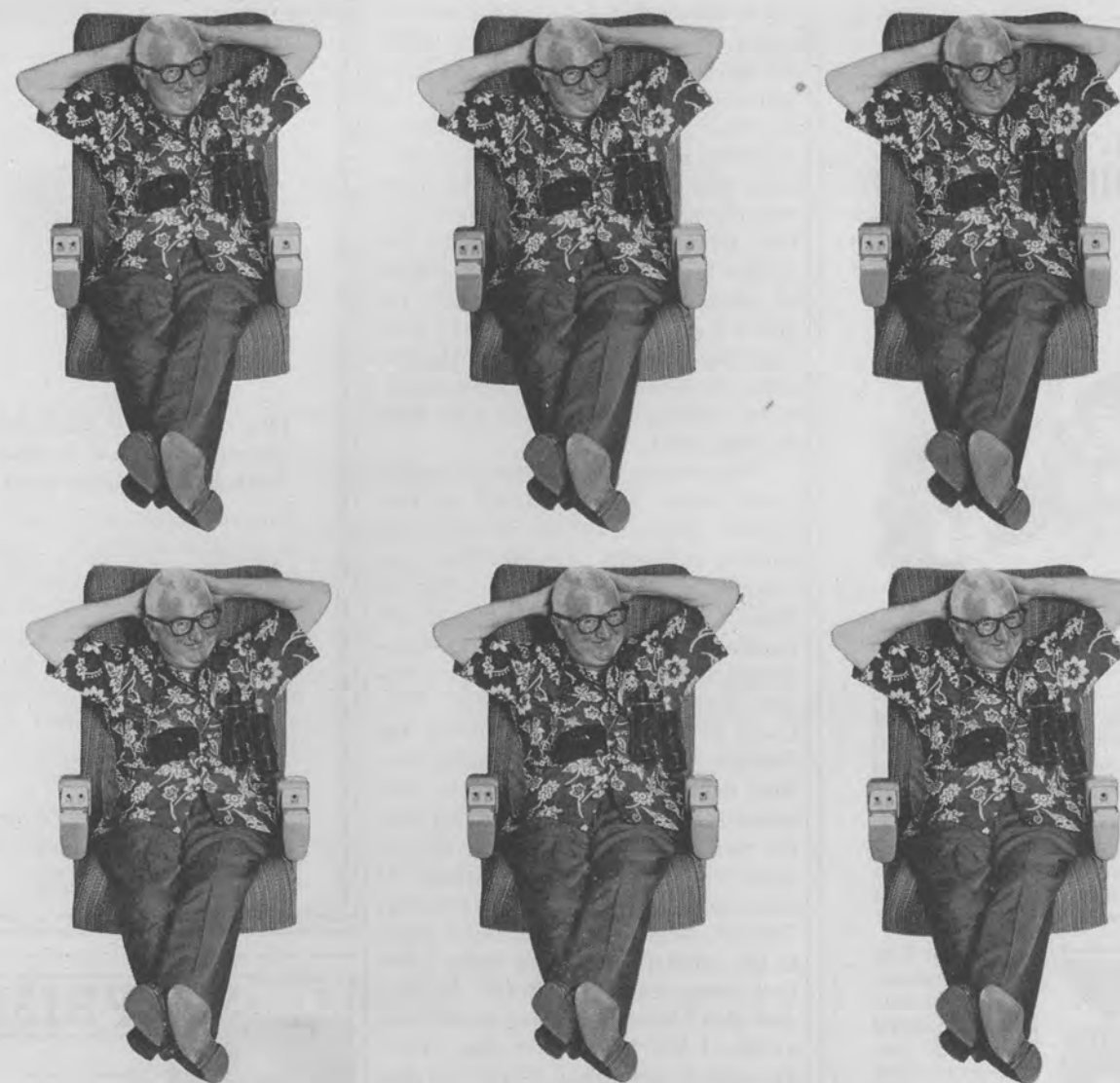
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last by saying that, while he happens not to believe in capital punishment himself, the international sympathy for Chessman was largely misplaced, because of the man's long record of criminality. Not long ago, another criminal matter came into Cabot's ambassadorial orbit, when he helped to negotiate an extradition treaty between Brazil and the United States. Aimed at "the repression of crime," the treaty, which still requires Congressional approval in both countries, would enable Justice Department officials to bring back a few prominent American malefactors who have recently fled to Brazil.

These days, Cabot's life is complicated by the fact that Brazil has two capitals—the new inland city of Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian government is in the process of moving to Brasilia, but although President Quadros is already there, the Foreign Ministry has not yet followed, and the American Embassy remains in Rio. Mrs. Cabot is looking ahead to shifting the family's possessions to still another embassy building, and meanwhile the Ambassador shuttles back and forth between the two capitals. Characteristically, he sees a bright side to all the travelling. "It takes time, of course," he said recently, "but it's pleasant—like having a house in the country and one in town. I like both cities, and I like Brazil. In fact, now that I know I'm going to stay here awhile, I like Brazil more than ever." He smiled, and added, "And that goes for my job, too."—ROBERT SHAPLEN

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