5. The Bloodiest Bureaucratic Battle

CHAPTER 5

THE BLOODIEST BUREAUCRATIC BATTLE

WHILE THE PRINCIPAL DIPLOMATIC ACTORS in the administration were defining their roles in foreign affairs, Carr, Moore, and Welles sank to the lowest levels of bureaucratic warfare during the meetings of the Foreign Service Personnel Board, the body within which the trio violently debated promotions, demotions, and appointments. As each man battled for his own private agenda against those of his rivals, their conduct periodically erupted into open confrontations. With so few openings available and merit increases growing ever scarcer, the struggle for jobs and higher wages took on an even greater significance among the three combatants.

Carr, whose primary objective was to upgrade the consular service and the status of the career foreign service employee, chaired the committee. He was often distraught over the conduct of his two associates, who frequently lobbied the White House directly for their favorites behind his back. On one occasion Carr caught Moore going directly to the Oval Office without Carr's permission and demanded an apology.

Moore continued to view his duties from a partisan perspective and therefore emerged as the committee's Democratic watchdog. Anyone

speaking out was expected to toe the administration line; any Republican who voiced opposition to the New Deal would lose any chance of promotion. Moore also deplored moral indiscretions such as intoxication, and the price of such a transgression could also be one's further chances for advancement. Moore, having come to loathe Welles the moment they met, described him as "unethical" and a "poor thinker," and therefore refused to support almost all of his recommendations to the board.[1]

Of course, Welles had his own agenda, and he used his position to promote those whom he personally favored and punish those whom he believed disagreed with him. When he lost at board meetings, he went directly to the president to plead his case. Many career diplomats recognized how powerful Welles had become, and those who feared him disguised their distaste and pretended to be his allies rather than risk losing a promotion or suffering a demotion.[2]

The friction at board meetings started in early 1934 and continued unabated until the summer of 1936 when Under Secretary Phillips, having grown weary of his daily responsibilities, decided to leave his job and assume the position of American ambassador to Italy. Unbeknownst to him, this decision would trigger the bloodiest personnel battle at the State Department during the New Deal.

Once Phillips had announced his plans, Carr, Moore, and Welles all initiated campaigns to fill the vacancy. Rumors immediately circulated that Roosevelt wanted to appoint Moore, but before the announcement could be made, Welles learned of it, met with the president, and reminded him that if the job became available, it should go to him.[3]

Joseph Green, in charge of arms sales, reported on the evolving confrontation: "The smooth running of the Department is already greatly impaired by the serious disagreements and personal differences among Mr. Carr, Judge Moore and Sumner Welles. Each one of them is at daggers drawn with each of the other. The situation cannot be allowed to go on forever."[4]

Adolf Berle, a close friend from New York and an early member of the Brain Trust who had assisted Welles in Cuba, respected him and wrote the president at the end of June 1936 that Welles had strong political backing in Maryland and with the Eastern liberal establishment,

adding an unwarranted and invalid assumption concerning the secretary's preference: "Both Sumner Welles and Cordell Hull consider that Sumner is entitled to it on all counts; and they are right. It is possible that Sumner would not care to remain if passed over. Were Hull otherwise constituted he would probably say so to you; but as you know, Hull does not make representations, especially just now."[5]

Carr had hoped that his longevity in the foreign service and his friendship with Louis Howe would make him a compromise candidate, but that chance vanished as Howe's health grew progressively worse. As the president's chief political adviser, he exercised considerable authority, but now this emaciated little man moved into the Lincoln Room at the White House and hoped futilely that his physical condition would improve. His final slide began in January 1935, and that summer he was transferred to Bethesda Naval Hospital, where he lingered until he died on April 18, 1936. However, Howe's death was not Carr's only liability. The assistant secretary had also made numerous enemies within the foreign service who saw him as too limited and as a relic of an earlier era.[6]

Some briefly included William Bullitt in their gossip about possible candidates, but he was quickly eliminated since many Democrats had never forgotten his disloyalty to Woodrow Wilson at the Senate hearings after World War I. They had already voiced their objections to any appointment for him at the start of the New Deal and would certainly oppose this promotion. In reality, Bullitt never coveted the under-secretaryship, for he had serious family problems. He had divorced Louise Bryant in 1930 because of her alcoholism and "cutting up." Six years later, after a bout of heavy drinking, she fell down a flight of stairs in a dirty little Left Bank hotel, suffered a fatal cerebral hemorrhage, and died a few days later in the American Hospital at forty-one. Her death left Bullitt with a daughter, to whom he was devoted.[7]

In addition to this personal tragedy, many disapproved of Bullitt's unprofessional conduct. Norman Davis, a Tennesseean and a roving ambassador for the State Department, had even more substantial reasons to be anxious:

> While Bullitt is a very brilliant and able man in so many ways, I fear that his feelings are so strong on certain subjects as to prejudice and

> becloud his judgment. I have had several responsible persons tell me that for the past year he has been quietly conveying the impression that he is the spokesman for the President in Europe and that he deals directly with the President, without going through the Secretary of State. It is a tragedy and a disgrace that American representatives abroad do not pull together as a team for their country. We always seem to have some prima donna trying to play a personal role, which can be done only to the detriment of the United States.[8]

Others had also warned Hull that the ambassador was untrustworthy and refused to accept the secretary's cautious approach to international affairs. Bullitt regularly bypassed the State Department and communicated directly with the White House, a practice that Hull's allies in the department criticized. Castle talked to Hull about this unwholesome situation and believed that the secretary should not confide in Bullitt.[9]

Hull could have easily charged Roosevelt as an accomplice in this effort to bypass him. Rather than tell the ambassador to restrict his correspondence to official channels, the president encouraged this kind of direct access and in fact led Bullitt to believe that he was the White House's man in Europe. Bullitt took this cue as permission to transform the president's unofficial assignment into a bona fide mission. Regularly corresponding with Roosevelt on Soviet policy matters ranging from debts owed to the United States to Stalin's purges, Bullitt also made suggestions about American diplomatic activities throughout Europe and recommended individuals for diplomatic slots. While in Moscow, the ambassador tried to ingratiate himself with the president, as in this letter from the spring of 1934: "I should like to hear the sound of your voice and be with you for a few days. I don't like being so far away from you." Almost a year later, he continued in the same vein: "Bless you for your kindness to me when I was in America and for your friendship."[10]

Whatever his feelings regarding the under-secretaryship, Bullitt needed all the support he could muster, for his Russian assignment soon turned into a nightmare. Arriving in the Soviet Union in December 1933, he at first was optimistic about the chances for improving relations, for he still viewed Russia from the romantic perspective of his 1919 trip. But after he proved unable to settle the question of debts owed to American

citizens and to check the spread of international communism, Bullitt's idealism quickly turned to disillusionment. He had hoped to win Stalin's confidence, but his inborn lack of tact made him ill-suited to deal with the dictator or his subordinates, and by the time Stalin began his brutal purges in 1935, the ambassador had turned against him and grown to despise his own post. By early 1936 Bullitt's residence had become a haven for anticommunist sympathizers, and his hosts initiated surveillance measures, checking his servants, tapping his phones, and screening every guest. Unable to function in this hostile environment, Bullitt left the Soviet Union with no significant accomplishments there to his credit.[11]

He sought another ambassadorial assignment and depended heavily upon Moore's assistance at the Personnel Board to win a desirable post. Bullitt's already warm friendship with Moore had deepened, and the ambassador signed letters to the assistant secretary "Yours affectionately" and extended "best wishes to your sisters and as always my deepest friendship." Moore replied with equal feeling, calling Bullitt "my dear friend" and protecting him from departmental criticism.[12] Bullitt also used Moore as a conduit to the White House. Since the ambassador trusted Moore and held him in the same high esteem in both personal and professional matters as he did the president, the assistant secretary became in effect a personal messenger for dispatches from Moscow that passed to the White House through Marguerite "Missy" LeHand, Roosevelt's private secretary. According to Roosevelt's eldest son James, she and Bullitt were romantically involved, and Bullitt had even promised to marry her.[13]

Bullitt returned to the United States in June 1936 to work on the presidential campaign and continued in that capacity until almost the end of the summer, when he took over as ambassador to France.[14] By the end of September he had already settled in Paris, and he reminded Roosevelt, "Please don't forget that before you and Cordell leave Washington [for the Buenos Aires conference] you must give Judge Moore the authority which he can have only if he is Under Secretary of State. A temporary position or Acting Secretary of State is no good."[15]

Roosevelt and Hull did not really seem to need this kind of prodding because they were already leaning toward Moore's appointment. During

the summer of 1936 Roosevelt mentioned the position several times to Moore, and before the president left for Buenos Aires he confirmed his preference to Hull in Moore's presence by jokingly stating that he was thinking about appointing his distant cousin under secretary. The secretary facetiously replied: "That will be all right if he isn't too close a cousin."[16]

The speculation over the new under secretary temporarily faded into the background as the 1936 national conventions approached. The Republicans nominated Alfred Landon, the govenor of Kansas, to head their ticket based on a platform intended to appeal to those who detested the New Deal and its leader, whom they referred to as "that man in the White House." Two weeks later the Democrats met in Philadelphia. On Saturday evening, June 26, after a rainy day, Roosevelt spoke from the darkened end of the horseshoe at Franklin Field into the glare of spotlights, addressing over one hundred thousand of the party's faithful. With millions more listening on the radio, Roosevelt used his renomination address to denounce "economic royalists." Having established this theme for his campaign, the president unwittingly turned the contest into a referendum on the merits of the New Deal and himself. Although he did not fully understand all of the political dynamics he had set in motion, the election would provide a dramatic affirmation of his personal popularity.[17]

Contrary to his involvement in the 1932 campaign, in which he had played an active part, in 1936 Hull only attended the convention and assisted in several strategy sessions and some fundraising; as secretary of state, he clung to what he viewed as the traditional role of his office, which was to remain aloof and avoid energetic campaigning. Yet the secretary followed both campaigns closely and predicted a Democratic victory. Just after the results of Roosevelt's overwhelming landslide had been confirmed, he left for the Buenos Aires conference.[18]

During the campaign, Welles served as under secretary of state for Maryland within the Democratic party, vigorously sought financial contributions, and attended the national convention as a delegate from Prince Georges County. The electric atmosphere of the convention leading up to the president's renomination consumed him, and afterward he enthusiastically marched with his delegation, waving a flag, smiling, and

slapping fellow delegates on the back. Celebrating at such a moment was of course entirely in character for most delegates, but this open display of emotion was quite unusual for Welles. When he noticed a member of the diplomatic corps observing his behavior, he promptly reverted to his customary ultrareserved demeanor. After the convention, Welles continued to work on the campaign while continuing his normal diplomatic activities and lobbying for Phillips's job.[19]

Even before Roosevelt's victory, Hull had decided to lead the United States delegation to the Buenos Aires conference and take Welles along as his second in command. Moore remained in Washington, and Hull gave him an obvious advantage in the selection process by making him acting secretary of state over Carr, who had seniority.[20] Despite the increased work load and his advanced age, Moore thrived on his added responsibilities and hectic schedule, arriving at his office before 9:00 A.M. and remaining until after dark, with but a few minutes to eat lunch at his desk. Nevertheless, he recorded on December 2, "I feel no sense of fatigue."[21]

As acting secretary, he witnessed the deteriorating conditions in Europe and Asia, worried about the danger they posed to world peace, and wished for a collective security effort in which the United States could participate, knowing full well that any possible American involvement would precipitate a storm of domestic protest. At the same time, Moore objected to the common hemispheric neutrality policy and disarmament proposals being advocated at the South American gathering, for he feared that those too might provoke public hostility.[22]

Yet even these anxieties did not dampen his exhilaration. Inside and outside the department, commentators speculated about Moore filling Phillips's slot, and the acting secretary of state confided to Ambassador Josephus Daniels in mid-November, "I can tell you confidentially that the President has more than once talked to me about the office of Under Secretary, but I begged him to do exactly what he thinks is best, without giving too much personal consideration to me. He is my very generous friend."[23] A few days later, he informed Ambassador William Dodd in Berlin, "I have reason to believe that I may become the Under Secretary, but I have quit predicting about anything."[24] Moore acknowledged the remote possibility of not getting the post, but he did not seriously believe that could happen.

Like Moore, Welles also assumed that he was the front-runner. Some inside the department understood that Roosevelt had promised Phillips's post to his protégé, and that if it was not offered, Welles would resign. The assistant secretary appeared to ignore the whispers to the contrary, for after his return from Buenos Aires, he spoke across the country about the conference's significance and highlighted the value of the good neighbor policy. Even without the formal title of second in command within the department, he began assuming more duties, and even critics like Castle, who disliked Welles, grudgingly conceded that he was doing a fine job.[25]

While Moore and Welles jockeyed for position, a more pressing domestic issue gripped the White House at the start of the second term. In his inaugural address, Roosevelt had recounted his grim vision of "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished." His overriding interest focused on how New Deal legislation might alleviate these conditions, and on how the Supreme Court was consistently striking down those laws as unconstitutional. He had to find a means of halting this judicial obstruction. His solution remained a secret until February 5, when he outlined a bill that would reorganize the Supreme Court by allowing the chief executive to appoint six new judges to replace those who were then over seventy years old. The president never openly declared that his true purpose was to force the court to uphold his legislative program, but argued instead that his plan would lead to greater efficiency and reduced work loads for the overburdened judges. This proposal, which surprised the nation, was quickly labeled Roosevelt's "court-packing plan" and immediately drew an adverse reaction. The ensuing protracted and bitter debate proved that the president had grossly miscalculated on this initiative. The court proposal slowly died an unceremonious death that summer, but not before Roosevelt had squandered an inordinate amount of the enormous personal prestige he had built up during the campaign on an ill-advised and poorly conceived scheme.[26]

At the height of the court-packing debate, Roosevelt and Hull met for lunch at the White House on March 10 to discuss the choice of a new under secretary. Hull explained that he was "in a rather embarrassing position" because both Welles and Moore wanted the job. The secretary

declared that Moore "was quite capable and despite his age has a very clear mind" and that Welles also was "very anxious" about the position. Hull's solution was to give the post to Moore "for a time" and then promote Welles after Moore had resigned to become "an adviser to the State Department." The secretary would make this offer to his friend, if Roosevelt would have Welles accept the arrangement; the president thought that he could "handle the matter" with Welles.[27]

Yet this compromise was never consummated, and in the meantime criticism multiplied. Castle, for instance, recorded that the president's inability to make a decision disgusted foreign service officers; the department's uncertainty over policy was becoming the butt of jokes. J. Butler Wright, a career diplomat, described in mid-March a department in which everyone was overworked "to the exasperation of many and the bewilderment of all. Your guess is as good as mine as to where and why it is held up and at the time of my departure no one seemed to know what the solution would be."[28]

Moore was growing impatient because he knew that Welles was vigorously lobbying against him. He had become frustrated and angry, especially since he had worked incessantly while Roosevelt and Hull were in South America. To give Moore's candidacy an additional boost, Bullitt returned from Paris in March, prompting speculation by some professional diplomats that his visit signaled a prominent role for the ambassador in this intrigue. Gossip momentarily intensified when Bullitt spent a week with Roosevelt in Warm Springs, followed by a trip to Washington for several days of consultations. However, he returned to France by the end of the month without receiving any indication as to who would emerge victorious.[29]

While Bullitt supported his friend, Drew Pearson was using his column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," not only to advance Welles's candidacy but also to discredit Moore. Pearson, a powerfully built man with a thin face and a carefully groomed mustache, was just beginning his rise as a journalist with a national following. He never divulged his personal fondness for Welles or their long association. Born on December 13, 1897, in Evanston, Illinois, into a family with a Quaker heritage, Pearson was the first of four children. His parents moved to Pennsylvania when he was five, and his father Paul became a professor of public

speaking at Swarthmore College. After Pearson's graduation from Phillips Exeter Academy in 1915, he entered Swarthmore and embarked on an outstanding collegiate career during which he edited the campus newspaper, earned letters in swimming and lacrosse, was named to Phi Beta Kappa, and delivered the valedictorian address in 1919. After completing his degree, he went to the Balkans to do relief work for the American Friends Service Committee and returned two years later to teach geography at the University of Pennsylvania and then at Columbia University. He also spent some time traveling in East Asia and India as a reporter. By 1925 he had decided to concentrate on a career in the news media, and in that year he married Felicia Gizycki, daughter of Eleanor "Cissy" Patterson, owner of the Washington *Herald,* one of the largest newspapers in the capital. During their short, stormy union, Pearson and Felicia had their only child, Ellen, in 1927; their divorce, a year later, precipitated a bitter custody fight for the child.

Pearson next moved to Washington, D.C., where he struggled as a reporter until the Baltimore *Sun* hired him as its correspondent in the nation's capital, specializing in American foreign policy with a Latin American emphasis. During this period, he and Robert Allen combined to publish anonymously *Washington Merry-Go-Round,* a commercially successful book attacking the Hoover presidency that was followed by an inferior sequel in 1932. After the books' authorship was discovered, Pearson was fired from the *Sun,* and although their second volume failed to sell well, the two authors decided to combine their talents on a newspaper column entitled "Washington Merry-Go-Round," which began publication in the winter of 1932. With its inception, the Pearson byline would be widely syndicated and read daily for over sixty years to come.

By the time Roosevelt entered office, Pearson was already considered an administration insider, having collaborated with Welles on a long, verbose foreign policy plank, which was essentially discarded, for the Democratic platform. Despite this slight, the president-elect invited the reporter to Warm Springs for advice on how to deal with the Washington press corps.[30] After the new administration entered office, the reporter and the assistant secretary remained close, and in April 1935 Welles asked Roosevelt and Hull to meet with Pearson, even though they

resented certain of his articles and felt that the columnist was "impulsive and given to writing occasionally under the influence of superficial impressions." Welles urged both men to talk with Pearson, who actively supported them and the New Deal, but both the president and the secretary refused to follow Welles's advice. Even without Roosevelt's and Hull's blessings, Welles refused to end the relationship, "which existed long before I came back to the Department. I have invariably found him absolutely loyal, on innumerable occasions exceedingly helpful, and he is gifted with a very shrewd mentality." To avoid gossip, when the two men met, they did so discreetly, often at their homes.[31]

Without ever acknowledging this strong bond, Pearson prominently listed Moore's shortcomings in three columns in March 1937. The first pointed out that Roosevelt's court plan was designed to retire justices over the age of seventy, and that Moore was seventy-eight. The second alleged that Moore was desperate enough to ask Bullitt to plead with the president for his promotion. Moore had also erred by banning medical missions to Spain, and this miscue further hurt his cause. Finally, Pearson pointed out that neither the president nor the secretary knew about a credit to Italy that Moore had approved as chairman of the Export-Import Bank, and that that oversight "put a further damper on Moore's chances of becoming Undersecretary of State."[32]

Moore reacted angrily because Pearson's charges were entirely false. He had never asked for the position, he pointed out, but if it was offered, he intended to accept it. The fact that the post had been vacant for such a long period further infuriated him. Moore was convinced that Hull was responsible for this untenable situation since the secretary alone should have made the appointment. Hull was painfully aware that this unwholesome atmosphere was disrupting the smooth functioning of his department, but still the secretary refused to act.[33]

In the midst of this mounting friction and after almost ten months of uncertainty over filling the under-secretaryship, Senator Key Pittman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a bill in mid-April to revive the office of counselor to the State Department. Moore would assume that post, and Welles would become under secretary. Both men would have equal salaries and (at least for public consumption) equal responsibilities. Moore assumed that the bill had been

introduced "to save my feelings" and believed that many senators viewed both promotions as part of a single package. If he were not advanced in rank, at least on paper, Moore reasoned, Welles would quite possibly have difficulties being confirmed by the Foreign Relations Committee. Senator Hiram Johnson considered Moore a close friend and wrote to him to solicit his opinion about this arrangement. Moore wanted to reply that he had never been consulted and was surprised by the legislation, but before mailing this response he showed it to Hull, who became aggravated. Although Hull told him to do whatever he pleased, Moore, not wishing to incur the secretary's wrath, rewrote his answer so as not to cause offense.[34]

On May 19 Roosevelt sent the two nominations to the Senate for confirmation, and they were promptly approved the following day. The president believed that, by promoting both candidates, he had discovered a solution that Solomon himself would have admired. Bullitt had hinted to Moore before flying to Paris that Roosevelt had hit upon a "clever method" of dealing with this ticklish issue, and Berle wrote Welles after the press release announcing both appointments that this action "would seem to indicate that the President has found an almost typical solution for the impasse."[35]

Even though his salary had been raised by $2,000, Moore preferred to remain an assistant secretary. Although initially considering resignation, he decided to stay at his desk because he found his work "congenial" and did "not wish to become entirely inactive." As long as his health remained intact, he would hold onto his existing assignment.[36] He had no idea what his new duties would entail, but he predicted that

> if Mr. Welles as Under Secretary is to have the same authority that those who have filled that office had, it will be in my opinion pretty bad for the Department. He is nominally a Democrat, excessively ambitious and autocratic, and notably unwise. He has always been very intimate with the President, and I hear that when he ascertained that the President desired me to become Under Secretary, he made a drive in his own behalf which caused a good deal of embarrassment.[37]

Moore described the events for Bullitt's benefit; after outlining the legislation, he complained, "Welles has won his fight with the President

and the Secretary, and it is desired that I shall win the consolation race. 'Thus runs the world away!' I heard someone say that if Welles is to be Under Secretary, the logical thing would be to replace him as Assistant Secretary by his spokesman, Drew Pearson. They are two persons whom I hold in utter contempt."[38] Moore lambasted Pearson for using his column to boost Welles's candidacy and discredit Moore. He vehemently denounced Pearson's conduct and character, adding, "He would not hesitate to criticize his own mother if he thought thereby he would attract attention to his column." According to the counselor, Pearson had regularly visited the department, until his welcome had worn out. Moore was upset that Pearson had stopped coming in "after some of his blackguard articles [to] give me the opportunity to tell him what I think of him."[39]

After a month of reflection, Moore, recognizing that Welles was "a heavy fighter," began to appreciate the president's predicament.[40] An admirer of the president, Moore never blamed Roosevelt for appointing Welles; in fact, he and the president, Moore insisted, remained on amicable terms, and his esteem for the president had even increased. Moore convinced himself that Roosevelt was a great president and was embarrassed that in Welles he had had to select such an inferior candidate for the under-secretaryship. Moore was grateful for Roosevelt's friendship, for the president had always treated him "in my very numerous contacts with him in the most generous and often affectionate fashion." Although mistaken in his belief that Roosevelt and Welles were schoolmates, Moore correctly pointed out that Welles had participated in Eleanor and Franklin's wedding. In the face of such close family connections, Moore rationalized that Welles could be the White House's only choice.[41]

The same warm sentiments, however, did not extend to Hull. The struggle for the under-secretaryship unwittingly precipitated a breach between Moore and Hull, a festering sore that never healed. The counselor no longer felt the same affinity for the man directly responsible for his original appointment because Moore knew that Hull had had the authority to make the appointment and had refused to exercise his power. To Moore, the secretary's moral and ethical standards were placed in serious doubt: Hull had acknowledged his preference for

Moore without the slightest hesitation, but had "lacked the courage to have me appointed." Although Moore would always remain the trustworthy counselor, this knowledge was not enough to maintain the bonds of confidentiality between the two men, for they never again shared the same degree of intimacy. Hull thereby lost his closest confidant.[42]

When Frances Hull learned about Moore's accusations, she defended her spouse and argued that Moore had blamed Hull unfairly, because her husband had had nothing to do with Welles's appointment. Welles had won the position, she intimated, because he had gone directly to the White House, bypassing her husband entirely.[43]

Rather than concern himself with Frances Hull's excuses, Moore closely watched as Welles's power and prestige grew. All he had left were his burning hatred toward his antagonist and as much time as he wished to devote to the destruction of his enemy. As far as Moore was concerned, Welles had orchestrated his defeat. He never forgave Welles's perceived transgressions and spent the remaining years of his life searching for a vulnerable spot through which to ruin his rival. According to Moore, whose unquestioned distaste for the man had grown into a passionate hatred, Welles had become the very incarnation of evil.[44]

Not deigning to worry about the bruised feelings left in its aftermath, Welles celebrated his greatest triumph. Believing incorrectly that he had lost the job of assistant secretary for Latin American affairs in 1926 because of political pressure, he could now claim vindication. Welles had emerged as the number two man in the State Department, and he stood to gain far greater public exposure. He expected to serve those above and dictate to those below. Most important, in the secretary's absence, the under secretary became the acting secretary, thus commanding the department's entire apparatus. In his new position, Welles would not only formulate Latin American affairs, but also begin to expand his influence to European matters. To be sure, Welles was still a controversial figure: those who admired him applauded the appointment; those who despised him dreaded the future; and few took a neutral stance. If anything, time had accentuated his obsessive-compulsive character, and he was now even more driven to handle every task, even the most inconsequential matter, placed before him.

Somehow the story of the battle for the under-secretaryship—the open rivalry between Welles and Moore and the eventual resolution of the conflict—has ultimately been lost to history, submerged in the drama of the 1936 reelection campaign and the court-packing incident. No one except Hull has given the episode any significance in his writings. The secretary's recollections illustrate both the problems of writing a decade after an event and his attempt to gloss over his own glaring failures.

In the introduction to his memoirs, Hull pledged, "I have narrated events as I saw them and have drawn conclusions in the light of those events at the time. I have tried to be as frank, impartial, and accurate as is humanly possible."[45] Yet these pious and noble words did not apply to his truthfulness concerning the battle for the under-secretaryship. Rather than set down an accurate record, Hull placed the blame for this unpleasant struggle on others. He correctly recalled that once Phillips had left the department, Moore and Welles became the main contenders for the under-secretaryship. Hull admitted that he preferred his friend Moore, but he then declared that Roosevelt had "had the responsibility for filling the vacancy" and maintained that although he usually enjoyed making selections, he had "kept clear out of sight of this competition." The secretary falsely alleged that he "did not become an open partisan by making a recommendation to the President." Even with the intervening decade, Hull surely could not have forgotten Moley's firing, his demand to choose a replacement, and the fact that when he had first exercised that prerogative, it had resulted in Moore's appointment as an assistant secretary of state in September 1933. Hull, furthermore, had discussed Moore's promotion with Roosevelt at the White House luncheon of March 10. Even if we concede that Hull's memory had lapsed on these facts, it is unthinkable that he could believe his own memoirs that "Welles and Moore agreed to compromise": the two contenders barely spoke to one another. Hull concluded his summary with an even more outlandish claim: "So far as I was aware, there arose out of this situation no serious disturbance of my agreeable working relations with either Welles or Moore."[46]

This view might have been valid from the victor's viewpoint, but it was not so for Moore, who began to plant the seeds of discord against Welles. Although these did not bear immediate fruit, they did take root

and begin to sprout. The antagonistic environment thus created provided the ideal climate for future intrigue. An administration in which the president enjoyed rivalries among his cabinet officials; a secretary of state who was incapable of supervising his subordinates; a controversial under secretary; and a counselor who was committed to his superior's demise—these potentially explosive ingredients needed only the proper catalyst to explode into catastrophe. That would take time, but Moore was willing to wait.