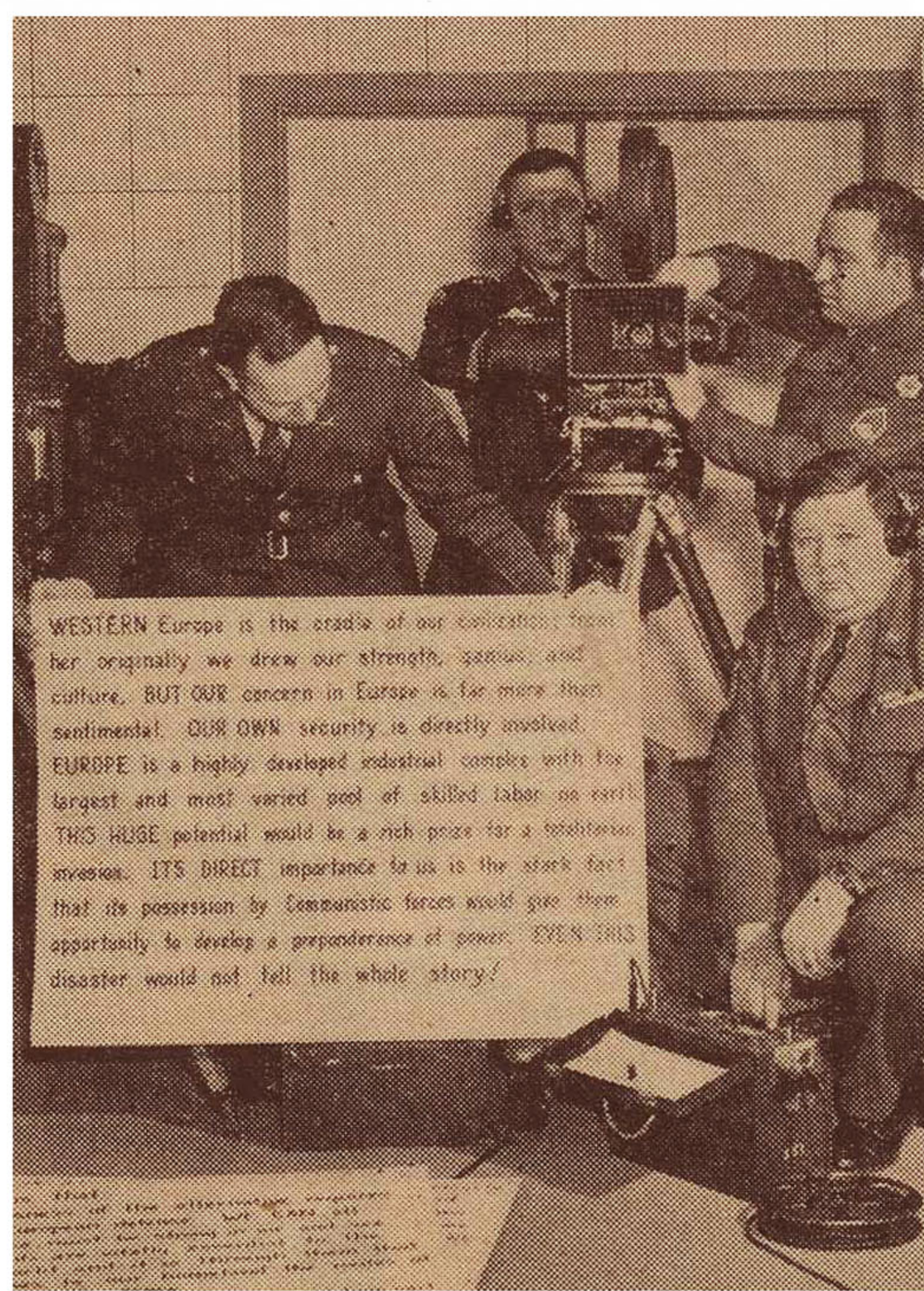


Pathfinder

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TV's new gift to politicians

*How to read a speech and
look at the audience too*



Video speech card. President Truman took a cue from Ike.

General Eisenhower used the technique first a month ago in his speech to the nation. Then Charles E. Wilson, defense mobilization chief, tried it. Last week President Truman adopted it.

The new technique for speeches on TV—reading from large cards with lettering two inches high placed just under the camera lens—makes it possible for the speaker to look directly into the camera lens, giving the appearance of talking directly to the viewer.

The result was so impressive that millions of viewers thought Ike had either memorized his speech or was doing a brilliant job of extemporizing. Actually, it was all lettered by a Pentagon artist on cards about three feet by four feet. Each card contained about 100 to 120 words, with the lettering two inches high. Two Army officers held the cards while the General read them.

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Cue Cards

No Glasses, Please. Characteristically, Eisenhower's innovation stemmed from his demand for something better. The usual method of reading from a manuscript, he said, was boring to any viewer. Besides, he would rather not appear on TV wearing his eyeglasses. CBS technicians, who had charge of the broadcast for the combined networks, suggested the card-reading method. Ike, who is farsighted, agreed to it.

The result, according to the mail received by the networks, was sensational. Two weeks later, Wilson decided to try it for his second speech to the nation. It, too, was a success.

The third big test was to come in the White House itself. President Truman, speaking from Washington, took part last fortnight in the Red Cross rally in New York, where General Marshall, reading from manuscript, made the main speech. The contrast between Marshall, with his head bent over a manuscript, and Truman—apparently looking the viewer at home straight in the eye—was dramatic.

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