

# Peace by Evolutionary Progress

*A New Dimension in Political Thinking*, by William J. Thorbecke (Oceana. 226 pp. \$6.50), holds that international discord will ultimately be harmonized by means of an evolutionary process not unlike that described by Aldous Huxley and Teilhard de Chardin. Kenneth W. Thompson, a social scientist, is the author of "Political Realism and Crises of World Politics."

By KENNETH W. THOMPSON

**P**OLITICAL thinking about the present world crisis often proceeds at two levels. The one involves description and analysis; the other projects solutions and a resolution of the conflict. William J. Thorbecke's original and challenging book is no exception. As a former diplomat climaxing a brilliant career as Netherlands Envoy to China, Dr. Thorbecke, who has also been professor of political science at Emory University, examines with studied detachment and a solid grasp of political realities the world struggle between Communism and democracy. As a disciple of Teilhard de Chardin and Julian Huxley, he turns to the science of evolution to resolve the Cold War. His analysis of the discord is forceful and illuminating; his argument that evolution will end it is stimulating but not wholly convincing. Nevertheless, Dr. Thorbecke's use of an evolutionary framework helps us to comprehend some of the basic trends in the world around us.

He leaves no doubt that foreign relations are conducted today on a troubled international scene. Dr. Thorbecke, who is clear-eyed about the opportunism and ruthlessness of the Communist leaders, describes how they employ harsh discipline and terror, cement mass solidarity through common hatred and fear of external enemies, and build faith in the inevitable success of the collectivist venture. He explains that "there are signs that in many countries people are beginning to see through the Soviet maneuvers," such as the peace offensive, which might not have become so effective, if it had not coincided with a growing desire all over the world for better understanding.

Yet Dr. Thorbecke, while acknowledging the false doctrines and cynical

practices of Communism, is uneasy about the prevalent American attitude, which is "unanimous in its condemnation." He examines the American "view that Communism is a gigantic threat to human well-being, overlooking the fact that though Communism undoubtedly offers a threat to others, it made life less harsh for the Russian masses than it was under the czars." He calls on the contenders in the Cold War to disengage from continued attacks and counterattacks and to synthesize the positive elements in both systems. To some extent, he believes, this is already occurring via creeping Socialism in democracies and creeping capitalism in Communist states. Individualism "is being given somewhat more attention in Soviet Russia," and collective needs are being met on a new basis especially in the United States and Britain. The differences in the Chinese brand of Communism have deep cultural roots in China's "reaction to a century of foreign subjugation." Thanks to Mao, China for the first time in a hundred years turned back in Korea "the combined powers of the world and brought to an end a long period of national degradation and servitude."

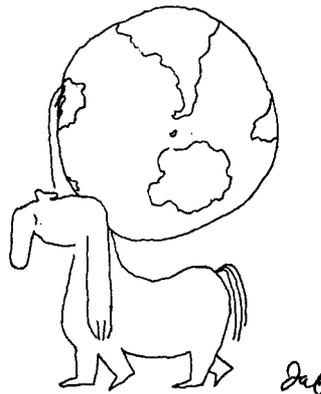
Nevertheless, if Dr. Thorbecke holds that peace requires greater detachment in the Cold War, he also recognizes the present need for military security and resistance to expansionism. However, he notes, in the long run security rests as much on economic and social progress as on a policy of containment. In the meantime, Communism has important weaknesses in fundamental sectors of society. For example, agriculture remains its Achilles heel. "In China each farmer feeds three persons . . . , in Soviet Russia . . . seven persons, in the United States thirty. . . ." Moreover, Commu-

nism in its more revolutionary and dangerous forms is threatened by erosion from within due to the ferment of freedom agitating Russian workers and the more pragmatic, cosmopolitan outlook of an emerging managerial class. There has also been a breakup of the monolithic force of world Communism especially through the Sino-Soviet rift. History affords examples of stranger groupings than an eventual alliance with the West by the Soviet Union to protect its eastern flank.

Thus Dr. Thorbecke sees hope for a more peaceful world in the winds of change that are drawing at least some of the Cold War adversaries more closely together. However, up to now the USSR has had no more to offer than coexistence and the West no more than the promise of peace if Communism remains within its present boundaries. Dr. Thorbecke concludes that what is needed is a "concept that grips the imagination and envisions a new equilibrium to which all nations can rally, the Communists included." Such a concept is evolution rather than the constructs of political science and diplomacy, which in the end "will fail us."

This reviewer cannot do justice in a few sentences to Dr. Thorbecke's formulation of evolution as a solution to the rivalry of ideologies and nations. Suffice it to say that his "new dimension" is essentially a restatement of Teilhard's and Huxley's theories of evolution applied to international politics. Life from its earliest beginnings has advanced by spurts and shocks toward world-wide unity. Teilhard's "noosphere" or sphere of interthinking is bringing about a convergence of the common interests of all mankind. In Huxley's phrase, a "single pool of common thought greatly helped by modern means of communication is putting an end to parochial inhibitions." World opinion is spurred on by "the meeting of millions of conscious minds on earth." As men become conscious of the evolving core of intelligence throughout the world, they will rise above nationalism and ideologies.

Dr. Thorbecke concludes his study by applying this concept of evolution to specific areas of discussion: American foreign policy, European unification, foreign aid, and the Cold War. His suggestions are provocative and challenging if highly sanguine and rationalistic. He has less to say about negotiating with the Russians on concrete outstanding problems or about the residual emotionalism of world politics than about the grand vision of evolutionary change. Yet, if Dr. Thorbecke's dream is ever to have its chance, traditional diplomats and statesmen must labor day by day not in a brave new world but in the realm of harsh claims and persistent nationalistic ambitions.



# Toward a Larger Western Alliance

***The Atlantic Community: A Study in Unity and Disunity***, by Drew Middleton (McKay, 303 pp. \$5.95), takes a gloomy view of the present state of the alliance and proposes a global substitute, free of U.S. domination. Philip Van Slyck is a consultant on international public affairs.

By PHILIP VAN SLYCK

DREW MIDDLETON's credentials for considering the state and future of the Atlantic alliance are superior. He reported around Europe for fourteen years, was for ten years chief of the London bureau of *The New York Times*, and served two years as *The Times's* chief correspondent in Paris. He has made use of his familiarity with chanceries and foreign offices, cultivated during those years, to paint a disturbing picture of an alliance in disarray and to offer a few proposals for remedying the situation.

His principal thesis is that "The crisis in Western relations has reached the point where an effort must be made to restore purposeful cooperation. . . . Europe is drifting into a state that will leave it vulnerable to internal dissension and external pressure. New forces and new issues that will affect directly the well-being of Europe are developing in Asia, Africa, and Latin America."

Middleton distributes widely the blame for the alliance's failure to mature to its fullest potential, and for its more serious failure to keep up with the shifting challenges of the times. The parochialisms of Western European politics and the rise of nationalisms in Eastern as well as Western Europe are matters he explores at length in chapters on Charles de Gaulle's pursuit of *la gloire*, Britain's economic senility, West Germany's ambivalence toward both East and West (on politics, economics, and especially reunification), Italy's unbalanced economic progress and unstable politics, and the tentative and as yet unreliable assertion of economic and ideological independence from Moscow on the part of several of the East European states. He is also concerned about the rosy view in Western Europe, especially in Paris, of the presumed diminution of the threat of war in Europe. This attitude, he implies, derives in part from confidence in the Washington-Moscow nuclear stalemate and overconfidence in



Drew Middleton—nostalgia for 1945-55.

the mellowing of Kremlin leadership, in part from Western European economic successes and the enticement of East European markets, and in part from West European myopia toward recent global developments, especially the escalation of the Cold War to the sophisticated level of "wars of national liberation."

The West's fundamental failure, however—and this is the author's pervading theme—is a lack of far-sighted and effective leadership. On this count he faults nearly everyone in power in the Atlantic community, saving his deepest exasperation for General de Gaulle. He considers the General a pompous and misguided chauvinist and cannot understand his influence in other capitals. Yet even Middleton acknowledges that the General's politics may well dominate France long "after the funeral."

THE author is even more ambivalent toward those he treats as an anonymous collectivity of American policy-makers, although he spends no time describing, let alone appraising, U.S. policies within the Atlantic alliance or U.S. global strategies as leader of the family of free-world alliances. He expresses nostalgia for the 1945-55 period of "creative" American diplomacy, while deploring the "pactomania" of Eisenhower-Dulles policies. He regrets the United States was not more persuasive in pushing the multilateral nuclear force (MLF), but would like NATO to make serious proposals to Moscow for European dis-

armament. He is unhappy about U.S. domination of NATO nuclear strategy and U.S. unilateralism wherever in the world American (and free world) interests are challenged; yet he would like Washington to do a better job of impressing its allies with the great dangers of the "next phase of the world conflict," now in process in Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

One might share one or more of these views and still say, "So what?" At moments of transcending Western interest—Berlin in 1961-62 and Cuba in 1962—NATO stood rock-firm. In Vietnam in 1965, moreover, France can afford the luxury of diplomatic deviousness without risking its own or the rest of the free world's stakes that are riding on U.S. firmness. This analysis of the alliance's weaknesses ought to be balanced, in other words, by an awareness of the free world's strengths. Diversity and competitiveness may be exasperating, but they are not necessarily fatal.

SOME OF Middleton's recommendations may have an appealing ring, though the manner of fulfilling them is left to speculation. In probable ascending order of priority they are: British entry into the European Economic Community; German reunification "based on self-determination" but through a formula "that will not disrupt the Atlantic community or invite new political progress in Central Europe"; a European unity that "extends into the political field and . . . is then welded into a larger Atlantic community," and finally a transformation of NATO into a "larger alliance," less obviously U.S.-dominated and capable of dealing with "the problems of the next twenty or thirty years." Interestingly, this new exercise in pactomania would include such anti-Communist nations as Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, and Spain; Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and the Philippines; and Mexico and Chile.

This is the difficulty with carrying micropolitics too far: one loses sight of the real world. Also, it can lead an honest man into strange paths, such as the proposition that in Latin America "the economic and political influence of the United States has been so great and the inevitable anti-American reaction against it so powerful that wisdom dictates that the effort to develop its resources and strengthen democracy be carried on by others than Americans."

This is a brand of wisdom that neither De Gaulle nor the Latin Americans, let alone the State Department, is likely to entertain with more than a quizzical eyebrow.

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## LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

Column One should read: 7, 9, 6, 1, 3, 10, 4, 5, 2, 8.