

# EUROPE BETWEEN TWO GIANTS

This is a Time for Choices to be Made

James T. Farrell

In the 1930s, it was predicted that in modern warfare there would be no victor. The prediction was not really vindicated by the second World War. There were two major victors in that war, the United States and the Soviet Union. They won, not only at the expense of their enemies, but also of their allies and of neutrals. Alexis de Tocqueville's great prophecy, that Russia and America seem "marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe," was over-fulfilled. The world, for most practical purposes, is divided into two opposed systems.

It is irrelevant here whether the cause of the division is a law of history, the correctness of Marx's eschatology, the revolutionary intentions of Lenin, or the simple realities of power. The world is divided. And no matter how benevolently we interpret Soviet proposals for "peaceful co-existence," this division of the world into competitive systems is accepted by the Kremlin as part of its long-range strategy.

"The Soviet leaders," Milovan Djilas writes in *The New Class*, "were fully aware of this process." He once heard Stalin, "at an intimate party in 1945," say that "in modern war, the victor will impose his system, which was not the case in past wars." In the presence of Djilas, in 1948, Stalin told Yugoslav and Bulgarian Communist leaders: "The Western powers will make a country of their own out of West Germany and we will make one of our own out of East Germany—this is inevitable."

In 1917, Lenin and Trotsky had foreseen this polarization of the world, but on the basis of Trotsky's "theory of permanent revolution," a theory consistent with orthodox Marxism. They were convinced that, if the revolution were to succeed in Russia, it would have to spread to the advanced countries where there was a "ripened" proletariat. Both men counted on, hoped for, and attempted to stimulate a revolution in Germany, because Germany was the key to Europe. A successful German revolution, they believed, would result in a Communist Europe.

The early expectations of Lenin and Trotsky were not fulfilled. The Stalinist system soon began to evolve in the Soviet Union. In Germany, Hitler came to power, and his defeat was accomplished only through an alliance of the Soviet Union with the

United States. The division of the world into the camps of two giant powers was thus achieved.

Germany, the "key to Europe," was broken. The Germans knew that they had been crushed. The bombed-out ruins of German cities, the snows of Russia, the awful concentration of American fire power, the memories of flaming houses, burning flesh in the night, the division and occupation of Germany—all this was different from the aftermath of the first World War. Just as France, after the Napoleonic defeat, could not regain the necessary élan and force to become master of Europe, neither could Germany now restore herself to repeat Hitler's venture. The world balance of power had been irreversibly shifted. Western Europe was no longer a power center. It would, in fact, have disintegrated and, in one way or another, fallen into Communist hands, except for the Marshall Plan and the fact of American wealth and power behind the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

NATO, it is true, has not achieved any real European unity. Without either the power of the United States as its guarantor or the collapse of Communism and the escape to freedom of the satellites, West European unity probably never can be achieved.

But the road to the unification of Europe by the Soviet Union would be opened if NATO finally disintegrated. Because NATO is more than a military shield and would be, even if its defensive capability were far greater than is now the case. The people of Western Europe grope for a greater community. Their need for unity is profoundly psychological, and not merely dictated by economic, political and military circumstances.

The German problem is still the key to Europe—but now in the context of a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union which is of cosmic proportions and drama.

Germany, however, is not the cause of tension; it is a symptom. The Kremlin needs and wants Western Europe and, today, it is as yet incapable of ruling Western Europe and of winning decisively in the under-industrialized world. If the future were to be one of "competitive coexistence," then Moscow would almost certainly lose without Western Europe, and especially West Germany. And even if Russia could make a Carthage of America, it would then need Western Europe all the more. Remove American production from the world and humanity would fall back a century or more. In any competition between Russia and the West, the Soviet Union seems doomed to defeat if the intellectual, scientific, technological and economic capacity of the United States and Western Europe are pooled.

The Soviets know this. According to Richard Hottelet, Khrushchev told Guy Mollet that he prefers 17 million East Germans under his thumb to 70 million of them neutral. When he says that he seeks a competition of the two systems, he really means a competition between the Soviet Union and an iso-

Mr. Farrell, the novelist and essayist, is former chairman of The American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

lated United States, with the remainder of the world subject to increasing Soviet pressure and blackmail. These are the only terms of victory, at least of easy victory, for the Soviets. Because, in spite of its scientific achievements, Russia cannot supply China, serve as big brother to Asia and Africa, and remain ahead in the military race if West Europe and the United States are allied and if, along with sufficient military capability to make war as horrible a death sentence for the Soviet Union and China as it would be for the United States and West Europe, the West, through NATO, organizes its competitive answer. The odds then would be too heavy for Khrushchev who, unlike Stalin, cannot afford a defeat. His continued leadership depends on continuing success.

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The failure to understand this situation is a major failure of Western leadership today. At its roots, this failure is the result of an incapacity to understand the real struggle, its scope and terms and its evolving strategy. Many Western leaders, especially in Europe, misconceive the whole nature of the German question. They are still busily solving the problem of Hitler, and re-living their ideological youth, like old football players trying to play as they once did when they have loose tendons in their knees and their reflexes are going.

Neutralize Germany and tensions would remain, with the United States facing virtual isolation, and with Western Europe, minus Germany, like a European Israel, but without Israel's vigor. The risk of war would remain for America and for Western Europe. The choice for West European nations and Great Britain then would be between becoming a Finland, or, even worse, submitting to Communist servitude—or else the total annihilation of war. The danger of war is not based on a common border in Germany. Indonesia is potentially as major a source of tension as Germany. The entire world is now a source of tension. Khrushchev's gamble is on the stupidity, inability to understand, fear of Communist blackmail, and lack of vision in the West.

We all dread war, and with reason. But dread is not necessarily a sound basis of policy, and often it results in paralysis. Communism, evolving out of a movement to eradicate human misery and to lift mankind to a higher level of freedom, justice and material prosperity, has become a conspiracy against humanity, a war against mankind. The Kremlin has turned Clausewitz's famous slogan upside down and practices peace as a continuation of war by another means. And as Karl von Clausewitz said, "Politics is the womb in which war is developed, in which its outlines lie hidden in a rudimentary state, like the qualities of living creatures in their embryos."

Tensions exist in politics, not in guns or even in missiles. And these tensions are world-wide. The danger of war exists now in world politics. And

Khrushchev not only has decreed that these tensions will continue; he is continuing to foster them. He has told us his end in many different ways. His most simple announcement of this end is: "We will bury you." It is with this announcement in mind that we must consider the future of the West.

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Many of the current proposals for United States "disengagement" in Europe through the creation of neutral zones—especially the creation of a "neutral" Germany—seem to me therefore an ultimate kind of utopianism—and, like most utopianisms, ultimately dangerous. There are no easy alternatives to the dread with which we have been living. The dread can be conquered, the final catastrophe averted, only through the painful recognition and ordering of power realities.

There can be no "safe" areas in a thermonuclear world, least of all in Europe. There can be no painless peace made with men who know only the terror of Stalinist politics. We must negotiate and continue to negotiate, but in the full knowledge of what the stakes in Europe really are.

"The triumph of bolshevism," Lucien Lauriat wrote in his book *From the Comintern to the Cominform*, "will be the entire realization of the horrible and terrifying nightmare described by George Orwell." When the Soviet leaders are convinced that the truth of this remark is realized both in the United States and in Europe, then a more realistic basis for negotiations will be possible. It is the failure of many in Europe to realize this truth—and their consequent retreat into dreams of "neutrality" between the two powers—that makes realistic, fruitful negotiation so difficult at this time.

The best hope for peace and for the world seems to me, therefore, to continue to lie in the strength of the Western Alliance, not in the encouragement of dreams of "disengagement." Because peace, if there is to be peace, can be built only upon realities. Our effort must be to make NATO not merely a military arm for the West, but the foundation of increasing unity—cultural, economic, political—among Western nations. Faced with the continuing power drive from the East, Western nations must either stand together or, one by one, fall. Should they fall, they would have only their own fear to blame.

We must learn to live with a paradox. The awful truth is that there may be no hope for peace. Khrushchev has announced that he will "bury" us, and we have no reason to doubt that he was here speaking as a Communist prophet. But if we take into full account the direness of the world's situation, if we do Khrushchev the honor of believing that he means what he says, then the slow, painful work of proving the Soviet leader wrong can go forward. Peace can be secured only by those who know how difficult, how painful, and how dangerous it is to attain.