

in the magazines

As America and the Soviet Union move closer to the possibility of significant mutual arms reduction, speculation increases about Soviet intentions, both in the disarmament and test ban talks just concluded in Geneva and in the Summit conference scheduled for May. *The New Republic* sees some cause for hope in the fact that, while "nothing of great importance is likely to be concluded, . . . the promise of something's being decided sometime will be kept alive. That, for all concerned, is good politics and good policy; for the alternative is to infer that diplomacy is useless and that the interests of the Soviet Union and the West are at every point inevitably and eternally irreconcilable."

In a lead editorial for April 4, *The New Republic* cautions against such negativism. "Despair," the editors write, "may be more dangerous than illusion." We are obliged to face the paradox of defense and survival: "We are required to 'catch up' with the Russians in rocketry, modernize and enlarge and diversify our conventional forces, beef-up NATO and help under-defended nations to arm themselves. And at the same time we must propose and be willing to carry out enforceable measures for slowing down the arms race . . . Opportunities for settling disputes can be seized, indeed, must be created—so long as it is remembered that there are times when nothing fails like success."

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"The war with Communism is a pervasive conflict between alien political philosophies, and, being such, victory must be sought in the minds of men. Yet most of the discussion of policy in a nuclear age has been framed in technological terms and carried on more by physicists and engineers than by social scientists." Charles E. Osgood, writing in *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (Vol. III, No. 4), analyzes "the dynamics of human thinking" that have forced us along the present course of our nuclear policy and left few outlets for possible alternative strategies.

Mr. Osgood develops three main criteria for the evaluation of current policies. These are: (a) support of our way of life; (b) reduction of the threat of nuclear destruction; (c) feasibility for our country. In the light of these criteria, he examines and finds unsatisfactory such popularly held theories of defense as preventive war, deterrence through massive retaliation, and limited war. All attempts at mutual disarmament have failed on the ground of feasibility, Mr. Osgood writes. "The high level of existing tensions magnifies biased perceptions of what is equable and fosters self-fulfilling prophecies about the intractability of the enemy."

In what he calls "graduated unilateral disengagement" Mr. Osgood sees the best hope for a rational policy. This policy requires two phases: (1) reversal of the tension/arms-race spiral, and (2) maintaining the peace. In Phase I we can reduce the threat to our survival and make possible the employment of other policies chiefly by intelligently manipulating the condition of the external threat perceived by the Russians. Once the condition of threat is reduced, longer-term policies designed to strengthen and maintain the peace (disarmament) could be instituted (Phase II). Mr. Osgood's proposal calls on the U.S. to undertake unilateral action to a larger extent than it has been willing to risk in the past. However, he believes that "sincere desire on the part of the Russians to avoid the eventuality of a 'hot' nuclear war, coupled with their anxiety about the spread of nuclear weapons and the pressure of world opinion, would force them to reciprocate rather than take advantage of these unilateral steps."

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In the April *Foreign Affairs*, Chester Bowles outlines the basic assumptions of a new policy intended to help Americans and the Chinese Nationalists relate their aims more progressively to developments in Asia during the next decade. These assumptions are: that the Peking government is in firm control of mainland China; that mainland China will develop "fiercely expansionist tendencies" toward the weaker states of Southeast Asia; and that a primary aim of American policy should be to prevent this. Although at present we cannot hope to settle any major differences with the Peking regime, we ought to realize, Mr. Bowles writes, that any effective disarmament program will require Peking's participation. On the subject of Formosa, our policy should, for the time being, continue to guarantee and enforce the right of the island's inhabitants to independence of the Communist orbit. Formosa's future security, however, will depend most heavily on "the orderly political growth of the non-Communist nations of Asia," and it will be as much in our own national interest to encourage Formosa's independence and eventual prosperity as to restore friendly ties with the mainland Chinese, "if it ever becomes practicable."

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"Morality and Foreign Policy," a two-part article by John Courtney Murray (*America*, March 19 and March 26), is also highly recommended.

PAMPHILUS