

in the magazines

Can we afford to disarm? This is the disturbing question posed by Gerard Piel in the April issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. Widely discussed here and abroad in connection with the failure of the Summit, Mr. Piel's article, "The Economics of Disarmament," describes the relationship between a permanent war economy, currently thriving on the rate of technological obsolescence in armament, and an unprecedented national prosperity. "It appears," he writes, "that economic compulsions play as significant a role in establishing the size of the national arms budget as any consideration of the military necessity." He points out that, "on a reasonable estimate for the present value of the investment multiplier [armament expenditures], the \$40- to \$60-billion war economy accounts for \$100 to \$150 billion worth of business, that is, twenty-five to thirty-three and one-third per cent of the economic activity of the nation as a whole."

"If we want to think seriously about disarmament," Mr. Piel continues, "we must face the economic impact that it presages. The war economy is not likely to be totally or suddenly dismantled. But if it is to be curtailed in the performance of its vital economic function, then some other activity must take its place." Pointing to the fact that "the prosperity of the American household has been accompanied by a profound depression in the public domain," Mr. Piel suggests a program of public works and public services to fill the gap. Like armament, "the products of these undertakings do not enter the consumption circuit, while the income they generate does."

Looking at the reason for that "profound depression in the public domain," Mr. Piel blames "the classical propensity to look at the welfare of the nation from the point of view of the individual businessman." This kind of thinking, Mr. Piel suggests, has led to a crisis in the nation's affairs. "The old viewpoint that looks at the life of the economy from within cannot see the future beyond the next turn in the business cycle—or the nuclear catastrophe that may bring it to a stop. The perspective that sees the economy from the outside can plan for the day when three-thirds of the population will share the material benefits of industrial civilization."

In the June issue of *Harper's*, Peter F. Drucker initiates a series of articles called "Politics for a New Generation." In Part One, "Agenda for the Next President," he addresses "Mr. President-to-be" in an attempt to "spotlight key issues and to suggest what, underneath the froth of campaign slogans, will really be at stake during your term of office."

What is at stake, in Mr. Drucker's opinion, is the realization of a new era in history. "The first need today," he writes, "is not for specific legislation, but for new goals, new attitudes, new visions, and new political alignments." Extensive revision in the areas of defense policy, economic policy and disarmament policy is vitally necessary, Mr. Drucker believes, but chiefly as a prelude to "the big job: to develop a sense of common purpose in the non-Communist world through our leadership in joint endeavors." In short, "our next President will have to create an American international policy. We have none today and in effect have had none for at least eight, if not ten, years. We have to decide what to do, what to aim at, what to be."

Dean Rusk's article on "The President" in the April *Foreign Affairs* is also to some extent an assessment of the challenges facing the Chief Executive today. Like Mr. Drucker, he addresses his remarks to the next administration, but he is concerned less to lay out an agenda for action than to indicate the nature of the burdens which historical change has placed upon the modern Presidency, transforming it into "an office of almost unbearable responsibility."

The focus of Dr. Rusk's article is a criticism of the additional complications of this responsibility resulting from the whole concept of personal diplomacy at the Summit. Summitry is bad because "it is not easily accommodated among the peculiarities of our constitutional system; it diverts time and energy from exactly the point at which we can spare it least; it does not give us effective negotiation; . . . it does not encourage the view that it contributes to the advancement of American interests." Dr. Rusk concludes that "Summit diplomacy is to be approached with the wariness with which a prudent physician prescribes a habit-forming drug—a technique to be employed rarely and under the most exceptional circumstances, with rigorous safeguards against its becoming a debilitating or dangerous habit."

In other periodicals:

"Realism and World Politics" by William G. Carleton, *The American Scholar*, Summer.

"The United Nations and Free World Security," *Current History*, June. Articles by Ross N. Berkes, G. F. Hudson, Leland Goodrich, Edwin F. Stanton, Louise W. Holborn, A. F. K. Organski, and Keith Irvine.

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