

The fear of some policy-planners is—to borrow the description of *U.S. News and World Report*—that Chancellor Brandt “is the man who is, perhaps unknowingly or otherwise, on the verge of handing over the continent to the Reds,” who is “selling out the Western Alliance in his anxiety to strike a bargain with the Soviet Union and other European Communist States.”

Well, those are large fears and the substantive issues are great indeed. But can one believe that Willy Brandt is much less sophisticated about Soviet intentions and practices than his American friends? Little in Brandt's life or career substantiates such a belief. He has been long known as a pro-Western, anti-fascist, anti-Communist political leader who has served honorably as the mayor of West Berlin—no sinecure—and as Bonn's Foreign Minister. Furthermore, he has said that his *Ostpolitik*, which is stirring up so much controversy, is based solidly upon his *Westpolitik*. He acknowledges, indeed insists, that West Germany must maintain close ties with the U.S., that U.S. forces in Europe are necessary until the situation resolves itself more favorably.

But, it is argued, even if we grant Brandt's sincerity and intelligence, may he not yet be wrong? Is it not possible that in his understandable need to forge policies for West Germany, to assume a position of political leadership in Europe, that he minimizes, discounts or simply fails to grasp the larger strategies which must be the concern of the United States to which his own plans run counter?

Yes, all this is possible. Such possibilities constitute much of the stuff of international diplomacy. But there are channels for the relatively orderly disposition of such problems as they arise. We have the State Department and a President, for example, who are aware of and responsible for forging the necessary decisions. If Messrs. Ball, Acheson and others wish to convey their informed concerns to those in charge, they have the means to do so. What they are doing, however, is to use both their knowledge of German affairs, their reputations within Germany, and political clout at home to campaign publicly against a West German policy which they fail to approve.

Is such behavior responsible? The issues themselves aside, there is little doubt that were people with sharply different views to engage in analogous activities they would receive a definite, no-nonsense, swift reply to that question. The question is worth pursuing. J.F.

THE TREACHEROUS TRAP

Some years ago, in a document issuing from Vatican Council II, the fathers of the Catholic Church described the arms race as a “treacherous trap.” Of all the descriptions lavished upon the arms race, that still stands as the most durable, most applicable today as yesterday. The ongoing SALT talks stand a chance of becoming a part of the treachery, a part of the trap.

Established to explore the avenues that might lead to strategic arms limitation, the SALT talks, it is reported, may lead to another step in the race. If so, it would be irony compounded, with concomitant risk. It was Reinhold Niebuhr who described a situation as ironic “if strength becomes weakness because of the vanity to which strength may prompt the mighty man or nation; if security is transmitted into insecurity because too much reliance is placed upon it; if wisdom becomes folly because it does not know its own limits.”

The quotation is apt here because the U.S. and the USSR move into the arms race, and into the arms talks with real strength, the desire for security and with a measure of wisdom. They are not stupid, weak nor ill-informed men who have the responsibility for the decisions that may emerge from the SALT talks. Quite the reverse. But if, as it is reported, they are unable to agree on the limitation of the A.B.M. systems, more potent offensive systems will follow. Fortunately, it is also reported that the USSR is interested in such limitations. This does not mean that the U.S. must agree immediately and without examination to a mutual pact to limit the development of the A.B.M. systems. But there is real reason to take some risk here. There is, in fact, risk in either direction, but one leads further into the treacherous trap, the other holds out hope that we can back some distance away from it.

We announce with regret the departure of Dr. Ernest Lefever from the masthead of *worldview*. After one year he has, he informs us, found the pressure of his other work too great to allow him to continue as a contributing editor. To do publicly what we have done privately, we would like to thank him for the singular contribution he has made to *worldview* by the very clear expression of definite views, and we invite him to send letters and articles as his time and interest allow.