

# Today and Tomorrow . . . *By Walter Lippmann*

## On Quarrelling With France *Walter Lippmann*

IF OUR OBJECT is to preserve the Western Alliance, a rein should be put on the zealots in the State Department who are indulging in an all-out quarrel with General de Gaulle. Until recently the President had kept the zealots in check. But recently



**Lippmann** probably because the President is so preoccupied elsewhere, they have taken charge of our European policy. They cry out that General de Gaulle's views on NATO are nonsense, that they are a declaration that France is an undependable ally, and in general that the future of the Alliance depends on the defeat, if possible the disappearance, of General de Gaulle.

For the preservation of the Alliance the willing adherence of France is indispensable, and the adherence of France will not amount to much if the Gaullists, who are the most high spirited, martial element in France, are defeated, humiliated and alienated. The State Department should remember that the main opposition to General de Gaulle does not consist of the followers of Monsieur Jean Monnet and Monsieur Lecanuet. The main opposition is from the left which includes the large Communist bloc. The coalition of leftist parties is not one bit fonder of the NATO organization than is General de Gaulle, and unlike him the leftist coalition has no great liking for the Western Alliance itself. General de Gaulle may make some of us as uncomfortable as if we were in a frying pan. But the popular front which might come after him would be the fire itself.

IF WHAT the French Prime Minister, Monsieur Pompidou, and the French Foreign Minister, Monsieur Couve de Murville, have been saying in the past few weeks is French policy, the issue raised by General de Gaulle is quite negotiable. France, they say, wants to preserve the Atlantic Alliance and takes with entire seriousness the obligation under that Alliance to come to the defense of the other members. France does not intend, they assert repeatedly, to reverse its alliances by making an alliance with the Soviet Union. France will not keep French forces under the integrated general staffs set up by NATO. But said Monsieur Pompidou on April 13, "We are prepared to debate with them (i.e. the other fourteen NATO partners), and particularly with the United States and Germany, the terms of application, whether on the transfer of the general staffs, the evacuation of the American bases or the presence of French troops in Germany. We are prepared to negotiate agreements on the facilities that could be granted to the allies and aimed at providing for participation by the French armed forces in joint action in the event of conflict in the framework of the Alliance.

The French may be mistaken, even wrong-headed, in objecting to integrated general staffs in time of peace. But there is room here, as Monsieur Pompidou's remarks show, for careful negotiation as to just how military planning can be conducted and just how joint planning among the general staffs can be made effective. But there is not room for going into tantrums of rage. We must never forget that the main military arm of the Alliance is United States Strategic air power,

and that it is not, and probably never will be, placed under an integrated general staff. The passion of the State Department for the integration of the general staffs does not extend to the integration of SAC.

IF WE STUDY the French view of the Alliance, not only in the rather delphic pronouncements of General de Gaulle, but in the speeches and interviews of his principal ministers we shall, I believe, see in a new perspective the dispute about the integrated general staffs of the NATO organization. There is no evidence to support the allegation that the issue of integrated command has been raised in order to disrupt the Alliance, to destroy the evolving unity of western Europe or to separate Europe from America.

"It is inevitable, and beneficial to all," said Monsieur Couve de Murville on April 14, "that Europe reassume its independence with respect to America. It is inevitable that the latter conduct its policy throughout the world, and that this policy, more and more, be outside the European countries. It is inevitable that relations between East and West not remain frozen in the situation they were in 15 years ago and that, as a result, the Russian-American rivalry decrease, at the same time as distant prospects for a peaceful and lasting European settlement come into view. Finally, it is inevitable that, in international policy, the new factors that have appeared in the past 15 years—that is, first the mass of newly independent countries, and second the enormous Chinese power—make their impact increasingly felt and that the Atlantic Alliance be changed by this."

This is a view of the world with which we can live.

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