

Today and Tomorrow . . . By Walter Lippmann

The Big Thaw

GENERAL de Gaulle's visit to Moscow is by no means the only sign of change in the order of things to which we have become accustomed during the post-war era.

There is evidence of a thaw in both parts of Germany. There is first of all the remarkable agreement to hold open televised debates between the German Social Democratic Party and the East German communist-socialist (fusion party). Though the Soviet government may yet prohibit the debate, this would only confirm and emphasize the fact that there is strong and potent feeling in both Germanys in favor of talks and positive collaboration.

The significance of this break with the old immobilized official German tradition was proved spectacularly the other day when the majority leader in the German parliament, Christian Democratic Dr. Rainer Barzel, proposed terms of a settlement with the Soviet Union which have never been dreamed of before and are, to say the least, offbeat.

There are signs also of a thaw in United States policy, not only in the President's wise refusal to get into an altercation with Gen-



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eral de Gaulle but, significantly, in Secretary McNamara's statement to the Jackson subcommittee that if the Soviet Union reduces its troops in eastern Europe the United States would act correspondingly. This comes after Mr. McGeorge Bundy's brilliant testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in which he advised the West Germans to accept the Oder-Neisse frontier and to renounce the business of nuclear weapons.

IT IS NOW clear that General de Gaulle's objective has been to put an end to the cold war between the western coalition, which includes the United States, and the eastern coalition, which includes the Soviet Union. His objective will be achieved fully when and if the two Germanys and the two Europes are brought together. As this process develops there will be solved as a matter of course the theoretical disputes of how much and how little influence the United States is to exercise in the new Europe. For in an increasingly reconciled Europe such issues as the integration of military command and nuclear sharing will no longer matter and will cease to be interesting.

A militarily reconciled Europe will, one may imagine, be chiefly concerned with the problems of the coexistence, the reciprocal adjustments, and the collaboration of the many different kinds of economy which now exist between the Atlantic and the Urals. For there is no longer any such thing as an old fashioned capitalist economy or a Stalinist communist economy. They are all mixed economies in varying degrees.

GENERAL de Gaulle has released and encouraged this European process and there is no doubt that it carries with it strong anti-American overtones. These

are due in the main to two things. One is that, thanks to the State Department, we missed the bus in Europe and are associated in the minds of so many Europeans with the prolongation of the cold war which they hope to end.

Another source of European anti-Americanism is the fact that without consulting them, without asking the judgment of the United Nations, of NATO, of SEATO, or of any other international body, President Johnson is waging a war in Asia which could become a world war. From the European point of view to be an ally of the Johnson Administration with its inveterate unilateralism is to be in a dangerously entangling alliance.

WHEN General de Gaulle tells the Europeans that they cannot count on the

United States in Europe because America's main interests are now in Asia and elsewhere, he does not mean that Europeans can deal with their own affairs and give the United States a free hand in all the other continents.

There is much more to it than that. Along with the changes which in Europe are making obsolete the military confrontation with the Soviet Union there are changes in the rest of the world which are altering radically the role of military power in the midst of social turbulence. We are only beginning to think about this and we shall have to talk about it much more in the future.

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