

They beat them because they fought better. They beat them because their generals were superior to those of the vaunted Wehrmacht and its General Staff. They beat them because they produced more, and often better, weapons. There were other reasons. The Germans had to fight on two fronts. The Russians received invaluable aid from the West, especially from America. But above all the Russians won because they fought better.

The book recreates the excitement and suspense of the long battles that raged from the summer of 1941 to the springtime on the Oder in 1945. There are innumerable insights afforded the reader. Here we might just mention the record of conflict between Hitler and his Generals. Clark seems to place both the military attainments and deficiencies of Hitler in proper perspective. He demolishes the myth, so assiduously built up by the German generals, that it was only Hitler's faulty strategy that was responsible for Germany's defeat.

Clark also shows how Stalin was responsible for the near rout of the Soviet armies because of his appeasement of Hitler on the eve of Barbarosa; and because of his belief that space was more important than fixed defenses, while ignoring preparations to use the space that was grabbed before the war but lost so quickly after the Germans attacked; and also because of the unbelievable decimation of the Red Army cadres in Stalin's bloody purges.

It is puzzling, in a work that evidences such careful scholarship, to find the author accepting some of the mythology of the late Khrushchev regime. Clark singles out one civilian leader and places him on par with the generals, such as Chuikov, Rodimtsev, Yeremenko, as responsible for kindling the vigor and heroism of the defense of Stalingrad—Khrushchev.

One of the most interesting findings of this work, somewhat speculative, but supported by factual material, is that the Russians could have ended the war in 1944. Purely military considerations,

to which Roosevelt and the U.S. clung till the end, were no longer uppermost in Stalin's mind at this time. He shifted his emphasis in 1944 to the Balkans to assure his territorial and political objectives, quite apart from the attainment of military victory.

JOSEPH CLARK

**THE NAZI SEIZURE OF POWER: THE EXPERIENCE OF A SINGLE GERMAN TOWN, 1930-1935**, by William Sheridan Allen. Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1965, 345 pp. \$6.95.

IN THE SMALL community of 10,000 which Mr. Allen studied, anti-Semitism had little resonance before 1933. There was little local hostility to the town's leading Jew—the banker, the community representative of “finance capitalism.” When the army set up a camp in Thalburg, as he names the place, civilians blacklisted by the local Nazis found refuge by seeking employment with the military. The mayor, politically to the right, nevertheless was appalled by Nazi excesses and was forced out early in the Nazi era. Many members of the local business community were not enthusiastic about the prospects of National Socialist rule. However, the elimination of the Socialist “menace,” which the Nazis promised, more than compensated for their vague suspicions about what the Nazis would do.

Mr. Allen's story, then, is not one of the interplay of massive impersonal forces labelled “capital,” “labor,” or the “Party.” It is rather the story of clashes in the market place between class-conscious workers and SA troopers. It is the story of the likeable and sensitive book seller, who became the first townsman to join the National Socialists. It describes the talents and the problems of the able Socialist leader in conflict with the boy on his block who grew up to become the equally able but brutal Nazi leader. In little Thalburg the Nazis achieved power when they took control of the town council. They then began the process of

*Gleichschaltung* on the local level. Not only were the unions dissolved and reformed under Nazi auspices, but even the local shooting clubs had to add "National Socialist" to their names to continue to exist. And "even the small school for the feeble-minded did what it could to indoctrinate its charges."

The theme of Mr. Allen's book is well-known. He has told the story of the dynamism of the Nazi movement and the hesitation, confusion and ultimately failure of the Socialists. His story is this theme's proof writ small. If one is tempted to laugh at the attempts of the radical right to seize power on the local school boards of small New England and Mid-Western towns, he might first read this excellent monograph.

H. L.

**AMERICAN DIPLOMACY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1941-1945**, by Gaddis Smith. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1965, 194 pp. \$4.95.

**THE RELUCTANT BELLICERENT**, by Robert A. Divine. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1965, 162 pp. \$4.95.

THESE ARE TWO in a series entitled "America in Crisis," now comprising eight volumes. Each examines in fairly brief compass a critical period of American involvement in international wars. Early in his work Professor Smith makes a harsh judgment of Roosevelt's conduct of foreign affairs. He finds that Roosevelt was a pragmatist who devoted himself to attaining "a worthy end" regardless of the means, and Smith concludes: "that much of Roosevelt's diplomacy fails of justification even on its own terms. Too often the means were questionable and the results worse."

The errors of Roosevelt's diplomacy, aided as we are by the 20/20 vision of hindsight, are readily discerned. Smith includes many of these errors under the heading of an "undaunted faith in ultimate Soviet good intentions." Unquestionably Roosevelt erred in that direc-

tion. But, considering the acerbity of exchanges between Roosevelt and Stalin before FDR died, Smith is far from complete or balanced in his analysis. He shows no appreciation of the role of the military, including Marshall, Eisenhower, even MacArthur in pressing for accession to Soviet demands in order to assure a united war effort, including war against Japan.

Nor does Smith consider the rather primary objectives of that total war—victory and survival. Roosevelt was successful in both of these aims and it is doubtful that even the toughest attitude toward the Soviet Union, when it was our ally in the war for survival, would have averted the cold war and its consequences. For the subject matter covered in Smith's book, the student would still get far more from Herbert Feis' *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought*.

Professor Divine is only slightly more objective, but also somewhat more contradictory in his volume. He analyzes the slow but inexorable process which involved the U.S. in its war for survival. He describes the deep seated isolationism in the public mind. Divine also shows how difficult it was to change public attitudes toward alignment in the struggle against the fascist axis. But he does indicate how much Roosevelt appreciated the need for popular support in this crusade.

The author pays a well documented tribute to William Allen White and Clark Eichelberger for the formation and activity of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. Divine disposes of the myths that would assign to our country, rather than Japan (and Germany), responsibility for our involvement in the war. Still he comes to the judgment that: "American foreign policy was sterile and bankrupt in a period of grave international crisis." That there were elements of sterility and bankruptcy cannot be denied. That this is not the whole story is equally certain.

J. C.