

## Plea for U.S. Policy of Power



**“Germany and the East-West Crisis: The Decisive Challenge to American Policy,”** by William S. Schlamm (McKay, 237 pp. \$4), proposes that we seize the wheel in driving bargains with Moscow, and charts the steps necessary to avoid the destruction of NATO. The author’s case is challenging—but arguable—asserts Frank Altschul, who is chairman of the Committee on International Policy of the National Planning Association.

By Frank Altschul

IT IS difficult in a brief review to do full justice to this profoundly disturbing book. William Schlamm writes with passion and conviction, and he has made a contribution to the discussion of the East-West crisis which should be avoided by all those who are reluctant to have some of their most cherished preconceptions questioned. For others, it is “must” reading regardless of whether in the end they find themselves in agreement with the details of his analysis or with his final conclusions. In any event, the thesis he advances is entitled to serious consideration.

The author has no illusions about the nature of the Communist challenge, the gravity of which he feels is still greatly underestimated in the Western world. He maintains that the defensive posture of the United States, and parenthetically of its principal allies, will not serve to check the gradual extension of Soviet power, and he is highly critical of statements emanating from the White House to the effect that “war is unthinkable,” and that “we certainly are not going to fight a ground war in Europe.” Such remarks, in his view, however casually made, cast doubt on the continuing validity of the NATO concept and create an atmosphere of confusion in regard to our purpose and our determination which immensely benefits our adversary.

We must seek, according to Mr. Schlamm, to seize the offensive from the Soviet Union. Rather than remaining in constant perplexity about the next move of Moscow, we must create a situation in which the Kremlin will never be quite certain what we are about to do. In particular, we

must by our conduct make it clear and, above all, *believable* that, notwithstanding this all-pervasive fear of thermonuclear weapons, there are issues over which and circumstances under which we are prepared to accept the risk of war. Failing this, our foreign policy is doomed to prove an ineffectual instrument in the protection of our vital interests.

Because Mr. Schlamm considers the security of Western Europe essential to our own security and a strong Germany bound to us by unbreakable ties essential to the security of Western Europe, the bulk of his book is devoted to a discussion of the situation in Germany as it is today and as it is likely to evolve. Having spent a year or more there recently, he presents an eloquent and detailed report of his findings, leading to the conclusion that with the waning power of Adenauer there is little time left in which to forge the requisite ties.

Much may depend upon the way we meet the crisis that Khrushchev has precipitated over West Berlin. It is the chapter dealing with this which gives Mr. Schlamm’s book unusual timeliness.

The real—the only—intention of the Soviets [he writes] was from the very beginning to maneuver the Allies into recognizing the Ulbricht regime: the recognition of “the other Germany’s” existence is the jimmy with which

**WILLIAM S. SCHLAMM**, one of this country’s leading commentators on modern Germany, was born and educated in Vienna. In 1932, Schlamm, then twenty-eight, became editor of *Die Weltbuehne*, an anti-Nazi political weekly, published both in Vienna and Berlin. When the situation in Germany worsened, Schlamm came to the United States and went to work for *Fortune* magazine as an editor and assistant to Henry Luce. He returned often to Germany during the Forties on foreign correspondent assignments. During the past year Schlamm lived in Germany, completing the research for his new book.

the Soviets can demolish the entire European structure. For this very reason the Soviet propaganda (invaluably helped by the coarse naïveté of the Western and, particularly, the German press) focused on the alleged Soviet demand that the Allies must withdraw their *troops* from West Berlin. But it does not make the slightest difference to the Soviets whether or not a few thousand isolated United States soldiers remain in West Berlin.

Having demolished most persuasively the myth of the “two Germans,” and having paid his respects to the Communist regime in East Germany as a Quisling government, which it obviously is, Mr. Schlamm argues that “to recognize the ‘German Democratic Republic’ in any fashion at all would not just be a moral but an eminently practical capitulation. An illegally occupied part of Germany would, with one stroke of surrender, be turned into a Communist fortification *inside* Germany.” And he predicts that any such recognition would lead, with the inevitability of Greek tragedy, to the ultimate destruction of NATO.

On the supposition that we surmount the Berlin crisis without the sacrifice of principle or of position, Mr. Schlamm in his concluding chapter prescribes the manner in which he believes we should recapture the initiative. We should, first of all, negotiate “a peace treaty that acknowledges the Bonn government as the sovereign master of all Germany . . . and, having . . . recognized the unviolable sovereignty of Germany, the United States [should] immediately sign a bilateral pact of alliance with that Germany.” This “would reverse the trend in Europe.”

Mr. Schlamm’s case rests on certain assumptions the validity of which is, to say the least, arguable. Because of the limitations of space, only one can be mentioned here: “The very heart of all Communist policies—and this, as I said before, the West has completely failed to comprehend—is their determination to *avoid* armed conflict.” There is much in earlier Soviet writings to support this assumption. Whether it has continuing validity today is seriously questioned by some informed observers. And this, after all, is the nub of the matter.

## New Concepts of an Old Enemy

*"The Death and Life of Germany,"* by Eugene Davidson (Knopf, 422 pp. \$5.75), and *"Germany and World Politics in the Twentieth Century,"* by Ludwig Dehio; translated by Dieter Pevsner (Knopf, 141 pp. \$4), are complementary studies. The first details the incredible political conversion of a former enemy; the second scrutinizes the impulses that motivate Germany. Edgar Ansel Mowrer, a syndicated columnist on world affairs, the North American editor of *Western World* magazine, is the author of *"A Good Time to Be Alive."*

By Edgar Ansel Mowrer

**I**N JANUARY 1946 this reviewer returned to Berlin for the first time since September 1933, when he had been expelled by Adolf Hitler for publishing a book called "Germany Puts the Clock Back." Before that he had lived continuously for almost ten years in the Fatherland. Ten years are a long time in the life of anybody, particularly in that of a newspaper correspondent. So it was with considerable excitement and mixed emotions that he returned.

Nazism had been an abominable thing. Nazi leaders had swept the Germans along into acts of unspeakable inhumanity. And yet life in Germany under the Weimar Republic had been rather wonderful: the Germans, in all fields but politics, had been not only stimulating (if a little mad) but amazingly agreeable. Their magnificent qualities were as striking as their defects.

He found ruin, unimaginable even to one accustomed to war's massive devastation. Facing the tottering facade of his one-time house in the Haendelstrasse in Berlin, behind him the once lovely Tiergarten reduced to a shambles, before him hundreds of acres of rubble stretching across to the River Spree, he found himself muttering over and over: "They asked for it and they got it! But how awful!" For quite literally the once neat, orderly, and industrially humming German cities had been reduced to a gigantic wasteland amid whose scattered ruins millions groped for salvage and food.

Thirteen years later, the visitor to West Germany (East Germany is still half-slum) finds a sovereign, highly prosperous, largely West-oriented people, under a going democracy blemished but in no sense colored by the presence of far too many ex-Nazis and unregenerate nationalists.

How could this come about so quickly? That is the subject of "The Death and Life of Germany." Beginning with the Allies' determination this time to prevent another Hitler by keeping Germany down forever, and the fantastic American decision to "trust Stalin," the author traces the slow modification through those eventful years in masterly fashion. In fact, as the impartial chronicle it sets out to be, this book is nearly perfect. At every page the reviewer found himself saying, "That is exactly how it was."

In addition, the book is smoothly written and quietly dramatic, fascinating from end to end. For here are all the steps of a complete and fantastic political conversion. During this

period the despised Germans of 1945 became almost the most trusted American ally. (To be sure, it was far easier for intact America to accept this change than for German-battered Britain or German-brutalized Netherlands, France, and Belgium.) A reviewer regrets the lack of space in which to trace the moments of Germany's "death" and "rebirth" and to reproduce the many striking and brilliant passages he notes in reading. Here is the authentic and conceivably definitive account of something almost unique.

If it has any defect, it is perhaps that it is too mild and "well balanced." One example will show what I mean. At the end, in explaining the American shift, Mr. Davidson writes:

Had it not been for the Russians . . . the change in American policy would certainly have taken longer but it would have come because the Americans ultimately demanded nothing of Germany but to join the good life of the West and to recite some political beatitudes.

Not quite. The cause of the change was undoubtedly Soviet perfidy and aggression. But after the disappointment of Versailles in 1919, Washington wisely followed Machiavelli's unassailable wisdom: treat a powerful beaten enemy so severely that he can never fight again—or so generously that he can be reconciled. Once the Soviets demonstrated their unshakable hostility the United States wisely sought to rehabilitate the Germans as quickly as possible and get them on our side. Letting the guilty Germans off was a risk but that had to be taken. For a new Soviet-German combination was a nightmare.

Reconciliation with Germany was not so much American good nature as essential politics—once the Germans proved themselves willing. Mr. Davidson glosses this over too much.

A pity too that the author did not concern himself with the relatively recent campaign for purchasing Soviet favor by offering to create a reunited but neutral and disarmed Germany. For any such bargain (apparently desired by the ever-myopic German Socialists) could be a major disaster for the West.

The reason becomes apparent in the admirable little volume by Professor Ludwig Dehio.

Historian Dehio, a pupil of the great Ranke, spells out in detail what few foreigners have grasped—that Germany's two attacks upon the West were the result of a deliberate policy, nourished by great "democratic" historians like Hans Delbrueck as well as by the pan-Germanists, of delib-

**EUGENE DAVIDSON** spent most of his life, until recently, on the Yale campus. After his graduation in 1927 he stayed on as an editor at the Yale University Press, becoming a member of the board of governors in 1938. After World War II, Davidson visited Germany. His interest in the American occupation led him to return many times to gather material for a study of the postwar period. He examined documents and he interviewed hundreds of people—from high officials to the man in the street. Now retired from the Yale Press, Davidson is back in Germany, already at work on another study of the political scene. In his search for information Davidson may well have met **LUDWIG DEHIO**, who for many years directed Berlin's State Secret Archives. Dehio, son of famed art historian Georg Dehio, was born in Prussia in 1888. Through the Second World War Dehio was one of Germany's most important historians and archivists. After the war he went to the University of Marburg to teach medieval and modern history and to write a book about world power, "Balance and Hegemony."