

worldview

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THINGS AS THEY ARE

In one of his press conferences President Kennedy asked, "How can we look at things as they are, not through party labels or position labels, but as they are?" This is a good hard question of perennial importance. With appropriate modifications it can be applied to most aspects of human endeavor. The classic statement of the tendency to see things not as they are but as they once were, to apply yesterday's solutions to today's problems is that "Generals are always well prepared to fight the last war."

The tendency is not, of course, limited to generals. It is a human tendency which one can see manifested in discussions and judgments at the highest level. Much of what is said about the present relations between America and her European allies, for example, takes too little account of significant changes that have taken place in Europe in recent years. Discussion about European reorganization is already great, but it is bound to increase. And much of it will turn on the question of what part America will play in determining the new shape of Europe. It would be unfortunate, and possibly dangerous, if the part the United States finally plays were limited by those in our country who habitually back into the future, their eyes all the while firmly trained on signposts leading to the past.

That Europe is to have a new shape is, presumably, beyond doubt. It is not that national sovereignties show signs of withering away—or are likely to as long as there are leaders like Adenauer and de Gaulle. But there is a growing recognition that closer bonds between the countries of West Europe will give Europeans a stronger position from which to operate, both with their allies and their enemies.

While such a development has its obvious advantages it poses serious problems to all the countries involved, including the United States. To take but one example, both Great Britain and the United States have felt strong pressure in recent weeks to modify their economic and military positions. General de Gaulle's constant ef-

fort to elect himself to the nuclear club is currently being reexamined. One of the powerful levers the General has used to provoke the reconsideration is his ability to ask a high price for Britain's entrance into the European Economic Community. Another is the lively possibility, of which there have already been intimations, that U.S. products might be excluded from Western Europe.

The question as it is now phrased is whether it would be worth giving nuclear aid and information to France in order to advance the European community and the larger Atlantic community. But the question thus stated poses false alternatives. For even those Europeans who have the strongest sense of union or community would prefer to see Gaullist France as a partner in rather than the leader of that community. Furthermore the United States has already made clear a basic postulate of our policy in this area. The existence of an independent French force that might incite a nuclear war that the U.S. alone could end would be intolerable.

There is another alternative, however. That is the creation of a nuclear force under European control. This is only one of the possibilities that exists, but the fact that it can, and must, be taken seriously is an indication of how rapidly Europe is changing—and with Europe the entire structure of power relations that we have dealt with for years. To deal with this changing structure adequately, there must be in high places a greater effort to see things not as they once were—or as they might hopefully become—but as they are.

*In accordance with conventional publishing procedure the next issue of **worldview** will be a combined July-August issue. This will be an expanded issue and it should reach subscribers by the middle of July.*

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