EDITORIALS

Atlantic disunity and de Gaulle

Gen. Charles de Gaulle is in many ways an extraordinary man. His courage, his patriotism and his ability to overcome seemingly hopeless odds have won him the respect of friends and enemies alike.

Any catalogue of General de Gaulle's qualities, however, must include his obstinacy, his imperiousness and the fact that he unquestionably ranks as the most exasperating Western statesman of his time. More than once in recent weeks political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic wrestling with the problem of organizing the strength of the free world must have recalled Winston Churchill's wry remark: "The heaviest cross I have to bear is the Cross of Lorraine."

Europe through most of this century has dissipated its strength in internecine wars and nationalistic rivalries. In recent years, however, Western Europe's remarkable economic recovery has posed a great opportunity. With a population of 225 million and a vast industrial capacity, a united Western Europe could play a role in world affairs commensurate with its genius and its resources. But this can be achieved only through the closest sort of cooperation: economic, political and military.

Great steps have been taken toward this end. The Common Market already has achieved a remarkable degree of economic cohesion, and great hopes for political unity have been aroused.

The policy of the U. S. Government has been to do everything in its power to encourage this development. President Kennedy last year offered to join with a United Europe in an Atlantic partnership of "full equality in all the great and burdensome tasks of building and defending a community of free nations." In proposing the Atlantic partnership the President was motivated by eminently practical considerations. As Assistant Secretary of State William Tyler said recently, in our European and Atlantic policy we have been "acting in a manner consistent with our interest; but we have conceived our higher and long-term interest as being essentially identical with that of Western Europe."

Accordingly, we have supported efforts to draw Europe closer, including Britain's application for Common Market membership, and we proposed recently that the nuclear defense of Western Europe be organized into a multilateral NATO force. To this end we offered Britain and France the Polaris missiles at Nassau in December, specifying that the missiles could be used independently "in matters of supreme national interest."

In an astonishingly blunt press conference last month General de Gaulle rejected the concept of an Atlantic partnership. He told Britain that she was an "insular" and "maritime" country that really didn't belong in the Common Market. In doing so he struck at the United States, which he regards as a Trojan horse sneaked into the market by Britain. He summarily turned down the Polaris offer and rejected out of hand the concept of a multilateral nuclear force. "France," he announced, "intends to have its national defense. . . . We are in the atomic age and we are a country that can be destroyed at any moment unless the aggressor is deterred from the undertaking by the certainty that he, too, will suffer frightful destruction." De Gaulle's insistence upon his own *force de frappe* stems in part from a distrust of the United States. "The Americans, finding themselves exposed to direct atomic attack from the Caribbean," he says, "acted in such a way as to rid themselves of that menace. . . . No one in the world, particularly no one in America, can say if, where, when, how and to what extent the American nuclear weapons would be employed to defend Europe."

The heart of de Gaulle's argument is simply this: He is not convinced that the United States would risk the destruction of New York or Washington for Paris or Berlin. Even if he were satisfied, he feels that he cannot be sure that we will not elect another Coolidge and retreat into isolation. Accordingly, he intends to go the independent nuclear route.

The United States is deeply committed to the defense of Western Europe. We have fought two wars for that principle. We have spent $41.5 billion for economic rehabilitation of NATO countries, and 440,000 Americans are now stationed in that part of the world. No one, as de Gaulle has indicated, can prophesy what will happen 10 years from now, but the best way for General de Gaulle to assure continuing American participation in the defense of Western Europe is to join with us in a multilateral NATO force. Such a force would be committed to the defense of NATO nations. It is unthinkable that we would not back up the forces we have committed to it. To be sure, complex problems of decision and command are involved. But surely these problems could be solved. General de Gaulle does not even deign to discuss them.

The French atomic force cannot conceivably compare with the U. S. or Russian nuclear deterrent. It will be capable, as de Gaulle has said, "of tearing an arm off," or threatening the destruction of Moscow. But Khrushchev talks of 100-megaton bombs that will incinerate populations.

In the last analysis Europe will still depend upon the U. S. nuclear deterrent for its safety. De Gaulle's insistence upon an independent nuclear force implies the proliferation of nuclear weapons—including a dreaded German nuclear force. It means also a dissipation of the Western effort at a time when we should be organizing our strength as effectively as possible.

The tragedy of de Gaulle's position is that the kind of Europe he envisions is outmoded in a nuclear age. Apparently he wants a loosely federated Europe based upon a Franco-German partnership with France as the dominant partner. The Franco-German *rapprochement*, ratified last month, is a consummation devoutly to be wished but it is hardly the basis of a viable new Europe. It lacks the power. Further, the keystone of German policy is—and must remain—its alliance with the United States.

What this towering egotist has offered is not effective European unity but a major obstacle to its achievement. Our course is to continue, despite the discouragements, the setbacks and de Gaulle's tendency toward "Bonapartism," to work for a really united Europe and hope that someday Big Charlie or his successors will see the light.

Bad words and good words Down South

A quartet of southern governors made speeches last month that are worth more than a passing notice. Alabama's incoming Gov. George Wallace, delivering his inaugural address, took his stance in the same spot where Jefferson Davis was first inaugurated as president of the Confederacy more than 100 years ago. As far as Wallace was concerned, the interval since Jeff Davis might just as well not have occurred. "I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny," Gov. Wallace said. "I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever."

Over in Columbia, South Carolina, the departing governor, Ernest F. Hollings, delivered his valedictory before the South Carolina Legislature and faced up to the facts of contemporary life. "We have all argued that the Supreme Court decision of 1954 is not the law of the land," he said. "But everyone must agree that it is the fact of the land. . . . As we meet, South Carolina is running out of courts. If and when every legal remedy has been exhausted, this General Assembly must make clear South Carolina's choice, a government of laws rather than a government of men."

Governor Hollings's successor, Donald Russell, a former president of the University of South Carolina, indicated that he intends to adopt a sensible approach to the problem. . . . "We shall meet with courage whatever the future holds for us," he said, "and we shall work out our problems peaceably, according to our standards of justice and decency."

The most remarkable and encouraging statement, however, came from Gov. Terry Sanford of North Carolina. "The time has come," he told the North Carolina Press Association, ". . . to quit unfair discrimination and to give the Negro a full chance to earn a decent living for his family and to contribute to higher standards for himself and all men. . . ."

We salute Messrs. Hollings, Russell and Sanford, and we hope that the governor of Alabama will someday undergo a change of heart.

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