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EFFECTIVE FOREIGN POLICY IRRECONCILABLE
AIMS?

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ARE VIABLE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND EFFECTIVE
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by

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//

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Essay submitted in fulfillment of Political Science 290 and
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"The social problem, the problem of our common existence, is in itself politics, politics through and through, and nothing else but politics. Whoever devotes himself to the cause-and he does not deserve the name of man that would withhold himself from that devotion-belongs to politics, foreign and domestic;..."

(Thomas Mann: "The Magic Mountain")¹

To answer the question posed by my subject is to approach the situation of the young PHD candidate who was reputed to have commenced his doctoral dissertation having all his conclusions in mind, and intending to research, only to support them. The question demands an almost visceral reaction, "Of course viable democratic government and effective foreign policy cannot be irreconcilable aims. We have a democratic form of government; we must have an effective foreign policy. Therefore it is possible!" The logic is faulty, but the reaction is almost irresistible. To consider alternatives is to think about the unthinkable and that we are not prone to do. One is not incapable of admitting that democracy presents some problems for foreign policy, and with the help of a number of critics and defenders of democracy we will attempt to examine some of them.

1. Thomas Mann, The Magic Mountain, (Der Zauberberg)
H. T. Lowe-Porter trans., p. 375

Alexis De Tocqueville examined the American phenomenon in 1831-2 and set the scene for future criticism of American democracy. Perhaps because some of his predictions were so uncannily accurate, his position as a critic has remained valid in the minds of modern readers, even though many of the conditions he observed no longer exist, and institutions have changed, not only quantitatively but qualitatively. In addition he was not infallible in his predictions. For instance;

"I foresee that all the military rulers who may rise up in the great democratic nations will find it easier to conquer with their armies, than make their armies live at peace after conquest."²

Precisely one of the major criticisms which have historically been made of democracies is that they disarm too quickly after wars, and rather than experience difficulty living at peace with their armies, find they cannot keep the peace because they don't have any armies to speak of. In spite of these reservations about his omniscience, one can hardly open De Tocqueville without coming across a passage that is germane to our discussion.

"It is difficult to make the people participate in the government; but it is still more difficult to supply them with experience and to inspire them with the feelings which they will need if they are to govern well. I grant that the wishes of the democracy are capricious, its instruments rude, its laws imperfect. But if it were true that no just medium would exist between the rule of democracy and the dominion of a single man, should we rather not incline towards the former, than submit to the latter."³

2. Alexis De Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Richard D. Heffner, Ed., p. 278

3. De Tocqueville, op. cit. p. 137

Here from an early critic we may find at least a good part of the crux of the problem posed. "It is difficult to make the people participate in the government..." If we are to have a working democracy, and if great aims, such as an effective foreign policy are not to be irreconcilable with democratic government, we must solve the problem of "participation" or the lack of it on the part of democratic peoples.

Having raised the problem of participation, I wish to abandon it here, temporarily, to consider a second problem which may shed some light on our subject. That problem is one of selecting leadership, for even democracies must be led, and the process of selection, by which hopefully, "the best" rise to the top of the heap is essential in any state. Perhaps nothing in Soviet-American relations caused more speculation than whether or not the monolithic Soviet Union would be able to solve the problem of succession after the death of Stalin. Obviously the Soviets found a way to solve it for the time, but their institutions don't appear to guarantee that it will be accomplished so painlessly every time, or at any assured interval.

It is possible to shift the burden of criticism from the institution of democracy to those who have led democracies in times of difficulty, and make a case for blaming the leaders and not the "people" for the historical failures of democracies in foreign affairs.

This is of course an easy way out, a "devil theory" perhaps, useful for explaining men like Adolph Hitler, but not

so easy to apply to democracies. It could allow the corporate whole to deny responsibility, since the blame is to be placed on their scapegoat, the leader, who was stupid, weak, short-sighted, or evil. The reason it is difficult to apply in a democracy is that the people choose the leaders, they have an opportunity to "turn the rascals out", and it is difficult not to hold them responsible for their choices. Still there may be some excuse for the people when they don't have men of quality to choose among; when men of stature, wisdom, foresight, and judgment do not seem to present themselves in times of difficulty, and the people choose the best of a bad lot.

We can scarcely go back farther in time, at least in the Western tradition than Thucydide's History of the Peloponnesian War to discover how long both of the problems we have introduced have concerned the peoples and historians of the West. The words Thucydides attributes to Pericles in his Funeral Oration, and his justification of policy after the Plague of Athens are to the point.

"We give our obedience to those whom we put in positions of authority, and we obey the laws themselves..."⁴

"...even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well informed on general politics - this is a peculiarity of ours: we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all."⁵

4. Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, Rex Warner, Trans., p. 119.

5. Ibid

Thus we see that these are the newest and the oldest problems in the world. In spite of Periclese' boast, Athens hadn't really solved the problem. In Periclese they had undoubtedly managed to choose the best among them as a leader; their effective foreign policy, (war in their case) had been adopted after full discussion by well informed men, and still disaster fell on Athens with the coming of the plague. This factor, the unanticipated plague, might be used to demonstrate one more theme. When judging the effectiveness of a foreign policy, and the society which adopted it, the fact that all things are not foreseeable, or for that matter controlable must be considered. This is the manner in which Periclese explained it:

"So far as I am concerned, if you are angry with me you are angry with one who has, I think, at least as much ability as anyone else to see what ought to be done and to explain what he sees... As for me, I am the same as I was and I do not alter; it is you who have changed. What has happened is this: You took my advice when you were still untouched by misfortune, and repented of your action when things went badly with you; it is because your own resolution is weak that my policy appears to you to be mistaken."⁶

Leadership such as that displayed of Periclese is essential to a democracy. Every now and then it is necessary to explain the unpleasant facts of life to the people. More often than not, they will respond to the challenge. It is when the leadership tries to shield the people from the unpleasant, and pursue a policy of weakness because they don't trust the people to respond,

6. Thucydides, op. cit. p. 130

that democracies get into trouble. Perhaps we can find coeumentation for this rather sweeping statement later in this paper.

We have added a third theme then to our original problems of persuading the people to participate effectively in government, and choosing the best among us to lead. The third theme is in short, that all things are not possible, foresecable, or controllable, and we should not judge democracy by a standard which is beyond the attainment of any form of government. Charles Burton Marshall in his "The Limits of Foreign Policy" restates the proposition for us in this manner:

"The capacity of the mind to conceive ends is limitless. The means at hand are invariably limited. The level of intention involves above all the establishment of a balance between ends and means - that is if one is responsible in his undertakings...All this applies to foreign policy."⁷

It follows, I think, that if we fail to successfully accomplish all that might conceivably have been done, it does not mean that our foreign policy has not been effective, only that the circumstances may have demanded more than we were capable of achieving. Nations, unlike individual men are not to be charged with Robert Browning's admonition in "Andrea del Sarto":

"Ah but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for."⁸

Rather it must be admitted that some things can, and others cannot be done, and what is more important, a choice must be made

7. Charles Burton Marshall, The Limits of Foreign Policy, excerpted in Ivo D. Cuchacek, Conflict and Cooperation Among Nations, p. 392

8. Robert Browning, Andrea del Sarto, in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, Christopher Morely ed., p. 488

in the allocation of resources, whether material or human, to the problems which are most vital to the preservation of a given society. The difficulties inherent in this allocation, and the problems involved in even calculating our capabilities will be discussed at length in the pages to follow. At any rate, insofar as our discussion relates to democratic governments, it must be admitted that the allocation would be easier in a society where man exists for the state, and not the state for man.

It may be inferred from the foregoing that I am concerning myself with the American experience and the American prospect more than with the problems of democracies in general. While the foibles and criticisms of other nations will be considered, it is appropriate that the discussion be centered on the United States, which, while young as a nation, might well be considered the oldest continuously democratic nation in the world, begging the question of a universally acceptable definition of democracy or democratic government. In addition, no matter how one attempts to qualify his statements, what applies to one democratic government, need not necessarily apply to another. Therefore, I will attempt a defense of the foreign policies of this democratic government in particular, and others in passing.

Bertrand Russell in his lectures for the BBC, collected as "Authority and the Individual" points out just how young the ideas of democratic government are.

"...the western nations first, and gradually the whole world, have awakened to a new ideal. We are no longer content that a few should enjoy all

the good things, while the many are wretched... This new belief is now so generally taken for granted that it is not sufficiently realized how revolutionary it is in the history of mankind."⁹

With this idea of newness in mind, and having determined to pursue the three themes of participation, leadership, and a rejection of the expectation of omnipotence in foreign affairs, I was struck by the similarity between my laboriously evolved prescript for a successful mature, democratic United States, in her pursuit of an effective foreign policy, and the "essentials" set up by Millikan and Blackmer in their book, "The Emerging Nations" for the transition of a former colonial oligarchy to a modern democratic state. They require these things:

"One of the most essential requirements is to raise drastically the number and quality of people capable of administering the societies business."¹⁰

"A second major need is to expand greatly popular participation in political life..."¹¹

"Lastly...Where there is ignorance of the limits of the government in affecting social and economic conditions, people tend to see those with political power as omnipotent and therefore wholly responsible for progress."¹²

The authors admonish the mature democracies to assist and teach the transitional oligarchies to accomplish the three things that we ourselves have not been able to accomplish with perfection over our long history of development under ideal conditions, and with a minimum of outside interference.

9. Bertrand Russell, Authority and the Individual, p. 47

10. Max F. Millikan and Donald L. M. Blackmer, eds. The Emerging Nations, p. 84

11. Ibid., p. 84

12. Ibid., p. 85.

All this is not to be decried or accompanied with a great wringing of hands. It is only idealistic dreamers who expect it to be any other way, and it is to be hoped that they are a dying breed. Democratic government is still an experiment, it is extremely new, and only recently tried. Alternative forms of government in the history of nations have nothing to recommend them over the fumbling efforts of democracies, if the good of all as opposed to the good of a few is admitted as a legitimate aim of government.

Democracy has never wanted for critics. While in the words of Professor Paul A. Seabury of the University of California, many unthinking defenders of democratic government have a great propensity to "...wrap themselves in the American Flag and sing the Star Spangled Banner," the critics have probed the weaknesses of democratic government as thoroughly as a biologist dissecting a frog. Still democracy's dessicated corpse keeps resisting their efforts and obdurately demonstrating continuing life and vitality.

Even the critics have their critics. Professor Gabriel A. Almond has said, speaking of political scientists:

"The systematic analysis of policy alternatives, or the analysis of basic social, psychological, and economic factors as they apply to policy problems...(is) definitely a very minor theme among political scientists...Then it can fairly be concluded that the political scientist leaves largely to his student and lay audience, the important task of evaluating policy alternatives."¹³

13. Gabriel A. Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy, p. 156.

If the proponents of democratic government are given to flag waving and anthem singing, the critics must bear the burden of negativism, abandoning the tough questions of what we can do and how, for the easier subjects of what we failed to do and why. This is not to say there is nothing to be learned from the past, but only that the institutions of democratic government have borne a disproportionate share of the blame for the failures of the past. This theme is here simply stated; it is hoped that it will be proved, or at least supported, as some of the criticisms of failures of foreign policies of democratic states are examined.

So as not to be accused of shooting fish in a barrel, by attacking someone like the immensely vulnerable C. Wright Mills, who qualifies as a critic, if not a very profound thinker, let us try the highly respected Walter Lippman. His classic, and oft-quoted criticism of the great democracies is as follows:

"...there has developed in this country a functional derangement of the relationship between the mass of the people and the government. The people have acquired power which they are incapable of exercising, and the governments they elect have lost powers they must recover if they are to govern."¹⁴

Mr. Lippman goes on to say:

"Where mass opinion dominates the government, there is a morbid derangement of the true functions of power. The derangement brings about the enfeeblement, verging on paralysis, of the capacity to govern. This breakdown

14. Walter Lippman, The Public Philosophy, p. 19.

in the constitutional order is the cause of the precipitate and catastrophic decline of western society."¹⁵

What Mr. Lippmann appears to be saying is that government officials pay too much attention to public opinion, and thus are too frightened to act at all, or if they do act, they act unwisely in accordance with the unintelligent desires of the uninformed and unwashed masses, (Alexander Hamilton's "Great Beast"). If this were all he said in this short and pithy passage, we might be inclined to shake our heads and press on. This wouldn't be the first time Walter Lippman had attacked a straw man called Public Opinion.¹⁶ He also attributes to this phenomenon an unarrested, precipitate, and catastrophic decline of Western society.

And yet, what does Mr. Lippman mean by this decline? That wealth and power in the world are no longer the private preserve of Western Europe and the United States; that the great colonial empires have been dissolved and replaced with commonwealths and unions of nations; that long exploited China is unified, and has become a world power, albeit not on our terms; that the "American Dream" has been successfully exported to the far corners of the world, and that a perversion of it, the economic promise of a good life, planned for but not yet achieved in the Soviet Union, has been shown to have some attraction for underdeveloped countries? If all these things are to be construed as

15. Lippman, op. cit., p. 19

16. V. O. Key, Public Opinion and American Democracy, p.5.

a catastrophic collapse of the west, perhaps Walter Lippman is correct.

It seems likely that, writing in 1954, or 55, with the economic recovery of Western Europe not yet complete, with China and Eastern Europe paying court to the Soviet Union rather than to the West, with nuclear parity a new and frightening phenomenon, and the re-making of the world ten years after World War II an apparent failure; with Korea divided, Viet-Nam partitioned, with "massive retaliation" revealed as a non-credible threat, with the Dulles policy of "liberation" discredited by the Hungarian revolution, and the future as always in doubt, Mr. Lippman had a right to be discouraged, and to look for the cause in the weaknesses he felt he could see in democracy. I'm sure with the wisdom of hindsight he had a "If we had only..." for every setback of the post war years.

I would not take issue with Mr. Lippman's concept of the "Public Philosophy," or his plea for a return to some belief in a natural law, and a sense of order and propriety in things. I do think it altogether possible that he has read too much disaster into the history of the twentieth century.

Gordon A. Craig's book entitled "Europe since 1815" presents a good workmanlike history of the events which led to World Wars I and II. Other books which have chronicled our successes and failures, and the problems of the world since World War II are as numberless as the leaves in the forest and on the sands of time. The wisdom of hindsight has so many faces

that to salute them in passing is beyond human endeavor. In the preparation of his "International Politics and Foreign Policy," James N. Rosenau acknowledges the assistance of two young ladies in covering for him some ninety journals (emphasis mine) in order to:

"...give (s) the editor reasonable assurance that no articles were omitted from this volume through inadvertance or ignorance."¹⁷

The events chronicled by Craig, the other historians of the period, the books of political scientists, and the contributors to ninety journals should have been enough to discourage anyone old enough to have lived through them. Walter Lippman is old enough to remember a good deal of those events, and in addition, he was "involved", in his thinking, and his writing. (In 1912, Mr. Lippman was already writing for the New York Times.)¹⁸

So many times in the twentieth century the great democracies were presented with challenges requiring what Kenneth Thompson has called:

"...the moral resources for acting when we cannot foresee the consequences of our actions, for choosing between practical alternatives weighed down with ambiguities and imperfections, and for guiding the people to accept the things they might do if they had the grasp and knowledge that their leaders possess."¹⁹

17. James N. Rosenau, International Politics and Foreign Policy, p. 3.

18. Dwight Macdonald, The New York Times, Alas, Alas, Esquire, LIX:106, May 1963.

19. Kenneth W. Thompson, Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics, p. 204.

So many times we have been found wanting. It is not extraordinary in the least that Mr. Lippman should hold Britain, France and the United States responsible for letting World War II happen, since no later than 1938 they had the power to prevent it had they not lacked either, "the moral resources for acting," or the Periclean virtue of being able to "...look into the future and see there the possibilities for good or evil."²⁰

Still I object to Mr. Lippman's using the institutions of democracy as the scapegoat for World War II, and the failure to find peace and stability following it. If that old balancer of power, Great Britain, is to be held responsible, or rather the masses of her "democratic" people, among whom did they have to choose for leaders in the period of their peril, Ramsey MacDonald, Stanley Baldwin, and Neville Chamberlain. Is there no guilt to be apportioned among the leadership, or ought the people in their sovereign wisdom, in the absence of any "great debate" to have had the prescience to sweep into office, (in a write in campaign, a revolution?) a Winston Churchill, or an Alfred Duff Cooper, two relatively discredited politicians who hadn't kept their fences mended, but were able to see what was coming.

Those same people whom Walter Lippman accuses of imposing:

"...a massive negative...at critical junctures when a new general course of policy needed to be set."²¹

20. Thucydides, op. cit. p. 90.

21. Lippman, op. cit., p. 22.

rebelled when they discovered the plan of Pierre Laval of France, and Sir Samuel Hoare of Great Britain to give Mussolini very extensive tracts of Abyssinia and virtual control over its trade resources, and in effect, buy the assistance of Mussolini in controlling Hitler's threats, by cooperating in the consolidation of his own aggression. Craig quotes Alfred Duff Cooper as saying, "During my experience of politics, I have never witnessed so devastating a wave of public opinion."²² A massive negative, perhaps, but a negative to a policy of appeasing aggression. If the leadership of the British democracy was really controlled by mass public opinion, might they not have interpreted this reaction of the people to appeasement of an aggressor as a mandate for action of an entirely different nature? To carry the might have been a little further, if the League of Nations, dominated by Great Britain, had successfully opposed Mussolini with really effective sanctions on oil shipments, might they also not have found the courage to combine effectively to forestall Hitler in his early aggressions? Instead, we know that the British people were lulled into complacency with assurances of "peace in our time," the French, their system of alliances scuttled by Great Britain's lack of backing at crucial times, crawled behind their Maginot Line, and the stage was set for the Hitlerian era, and the beginnings of our present woes.²³

22. Gordon A. Craig, Europe Since 1815, p. 682

23. Ibid., pp. 693-705.

It is not my intention to do a historical survey of all the foreign policy failures of the twentieth century, with the purpose of pointing out, in every case, that the failure was not necessarily the fault of the people, or of any peculiarity of democratic government. But since there seems to be more than a suspicion that democratic government contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and that destruction will come about through failures to develop effective foreign policies, it should be appropriate to examine the fatal flaw or flaws, if they are discernible.

Most political writers seem to agree that the great mass of the people, not only does not know what is going on, but does not want to know. In addition, most admit, that even if the people did want to know, a complete grasp of all the complexities of our interdependence with other nations and groups of nations is beyond their grasp. Indeed there are few writers who would claim that they have all the facts, that they are capable of deciding all the problems, and making all the thousands of judgments that have to be made every day which affect our relations with other nations, and in many cases our future.

V. O. Key, in his "Public Opinion and American Democracy" makes use of a great body of data gathered by the Michigan Survey Research Center to establish some criteria for the real interest and influence of the people on government. He draws some interesting conclusions about the problem of "selection of leaders"

which was raised earlier.

"The travails of democracies in the past half-century have tarnished the image of elections as an instrument of popular decision. Abortive installations of democratic practices in nations scattered over the world have contributed to this disenchantment, though the moral may be that democratic procedures are workable only under some circumstances and then only by people habituated to their requirements...

Obviously one cannot maintain that public opinion is projected through elections with a crystalline clarity to animate governments to actions in accord with patterns it prescribes in precise detail. If such were the reality, governments would be hamstrung.... Elections cannot be regarded solely as a conduit for the transmission of policy preferences to the government. They also express other judgments and preferences - such as those about candidates and about past performance of government-..."²⁴

I have quoted at length from Key, because his work has had considerable influence on the approach I have taken in this paper. He points up the need for greater participation of the people in the decisions of government, but limits them, because of their inherent limitations to broad areas of policy, on very general topics. He demonstrates how very great are the forces necessary to shake the people out of their apathy, but points out that this can be a blessing in disguise. In what amounts to a very effective answer to Walter Lippman's accusation of the paralyzing effect of public opinion on the politician, he states:

"Furthermore, translation of opinions into actions of electoral punishment or reward is a tortuous and uncertain procedure. The predictability of electoral response to a particular action remains so uncertain that the avoidance of a sensible decision because it will lose votes is usually the work of a man whose anxieties outweigh his capacities of prediction." 25

24. Key, *op. cit.*, p. 438-9

25. *Ibid.*, pp 557-8

I think the foregoing paragraph ought to be required reading for all politicians who worry about the folks back home, and required reading for Walter Lippman who seems to feel that the masses have their fingers on the jugular vein of government.

Perhaps it is fruitless to explore the question of where power lies in a democracy. It is altogether possible that it doesn't stay in one place, and certainly the debate has raged for many years, in different approaches and methods. C. Wright Mills was mentioned earlier. Unlike Walter Lippman, he placed power in the hands of a clique of the big rich, the corporate bosses, the military brass, and a few key politicians.²⁶ Too many people have taken pot shots at Mills for me to add my critique, except to point out that his thesis is symptomatic of the fact that the exact workings of a democracy are not completely known, and there is support for almost any theory of power relationships between the governors and the governed, except one that takes all factors into consideration, and still makes sense. Nothing can be more dangerous in politics, or political writing, or in foreign affairs for that matter than an unequivocal statement, and yet if we hesitate to say anything without a support train of qualifications, we run the risk of saying nothing at all. The "Last Press Conference" of Richard Nixon after his defeat in the California Gubernatorial election might be a case in point. Mr. Nixon said:

"This is my last press conference....you won't have Nixon to kick around any more."²⁷

26. C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite, pp. 269-297

27. Richard M. Nixon, quoted in The Oakland Tribune, Oct. 7, 1962.

To my recollection there have been many interviews with the press since then, perhaps not press conferences, perhaps he doesn't rate them any more. Still "last press conference" was unequivocal enough.

If we may abandon the digression, and the whole subject of the derangement of power in a democracy, and examine some critics who are more specific, perhaps we can proceed to general conclusions from concrete instances, rather than try to deal with the implications of generalities unsupported by factual situations.

Herman Kahn in his monumental effort "On Thermonuclear War" states his misgivings about democracy in a fairly typical manner:

"We live in a democracy. One of the characteristic weaknesses of democracy is an inability to carry out complicated long term programs in a steadfast and competent way....I have some suggestions for improving long term policy planning...One way to do this is to make a serious attempt to lift the level of discussion. I believe it can be done, but only if there is on one hand some self restraint on the part of those who are trying to facilitate a program by the use of adept language and, on the other hand, much more savage criticism and punishment for those who are caught confusing or oversimplifying issues when it is inappropriate."²⁶

I can't take issue with the last part of Herman Kahn's statement. Raising the level of discussion is tantamount to increasing participation in government, and is part of the three pronged program for improved democracy I proposed in the beginning of this paper. I can and do take issue with his statement that

26. Herman Kahn, On Thermonuclear War, p. 343.

democracies are unable to carry out complicated long term programs in a steadfast and competent way. His statement is flatly contradicted by the speech of the Honorable Dean Acheson delivered as a McNerney Lecture at the University of California, on March 13, 1963. Mr. Acheson stated:

"...Let us have a look, after the high wind of last January, at the state of well - or ill-being of what has been probably the most long continued, enlightened, extensive, and successful endeavor in history. What has been done since the end of the last war, a period of less than twenty years, is nothing less than the restoration of allies, friends, and former enemies alike after shattering experiences, and the building of a Western European-North American nexus to deal with the world wide dangers and problems of an entirely new world."²⁹

I don't think Mr. Acheson overstates his case. We tend to look at the events which took place after World War II, and think of them as one series of preventable disasters; Korea divided, Viet Nam partitioned, Eastern satellites in bondage, nuclear monopoly lost, China Communist, and think of the whole period, as Walter Lippman obviously does, as a period of catastrophic decline for the West. I think more statements like Mr. Acheson's are called for to balance the picture, and put the great things we have done in some sort of proportional juxtaposition to our admitted failures. I am not prepared to admit without an argument, that we could have prevented the Indo-Chinese debacle, disfunctional as the society was, nor am I convinced that the Korean war was not as Herman Kahn calls it, in "Thinking About the Unthinkable," a war which will probably go down in history as, "...the right war, in

29. Dean Acheson, Speech delivered on the Campus of the University of California, Berkeley, California, March 13, 1963, on deposit in the Library of the University of California.

the right place, at about the right time."³⁰ I'm not sure that there was anything we could have done about the defection of China from the west, unless we were prepared to invade, and stay, and if we had, the problem of disengagement from our occupational responsibilities would make our present problems of co-existence with a hostile China look like child's play.

In short, our record in foreign and domestic affairs in the period following World War II conforms, in my opinion, much more accurately to the picture which Mr. Acheson paints than those who would look back on it as a string of defeats unrelieved by a single victory.

I have purposely avoided trying to define heretofore what an effective foreign policy is, or might be. Perhaps the discussion of long continued, enlightened, extensive and successful endeavors is a good place to bring it up. In the first place as a nation state, an effective foreign policy must be in the national interest, both short and long range, which only brings up another question, what is the national interest, and if we can define it, can we recognize it when policy alternatives are being considered? Truly it is beside the point, for our discussion, unless it is asserted that there is something peculiar about a democracy which renders it more incapable than some other form of government of recognizing its own national interest.

The question with regard to the United States is complicated

30. Herman Kahn, Thinking About The Unthinkable, p. 173

by the fact that, in addition to our being a democracy, we are a giant among nations. For a nation that looms as large as the United States in the world, no policy at all, is a foreign policy with far reaching effects on friends and enemies alike. Peter B. Kenen has titled his recent book just that appropriately enough, "Giant Among Nations." Basically it is a review of our foreign economic policy. The magnitude of our involvement with practically everybody is made quite clear. The complexities of the problems involved are pointed up by the fact that someone had to decide, in preparing the Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1958 that "Pregnant Mare's Urine", had to be included in the escape clause of the act.³¹ One wonders what they do with the stuff, but it's in the table, and the U. S. Tariff Commission was required to consider it along with other commodities in their deliberations.

With this introduction, it might be appropriate to consider just one long term policy, or endeavor which Herman Kahn seems to doubt our ability to conceive and carry out.

Ever since the accession to the Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, this country has been pursuing a policy of encouraging, and attempting to arrange for freer trade among nations. The path has not been easy, and the process of educating the American people, and particularly the business community who felt their special interests were threatened has been a long and complicated one. Administration after administration, President after President, the policy has been held to, while the misgivings of domestic

31. Peter B. Kenen, Giant Among Nations, p. 68.

producers have been allayed with devices which offered limited protection from the beginning, and have gotten less and less protective ever since.

The Trade expansion act of 1962 might be considered the culmination of the policy.

Aside from the question of whether or not the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 is a good law or not (and it is) the process by which it was enacted is illustrative of just how effectively a democracy as large and complex as ours can function, when a vital interest is at stake, and enlightened leadership is available to formulate and carry out a policy.

The Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives was charged with the responsibility of drafting the new law. It was President Kennedy's "Must" legislation for 1962. Hearings were held over a period of months. Over one thousand eight hundred and fifty persons or organizations either appeared before the Committee, or submitted documents for the record. The hearings when completed comprised six volumes with about 630 pages to the volume, totaling approximately 2,987,760 words.³² The shock troops of the Kennedy Administration wended their way to the hearing room one by one, the Secretary of Agriculture representing the farmers, more than the administration, or the country as a whole, the Secretary of Commerce representing the business community in a dual role calculated to induce schizophrenia, having to protect the interests of those whose production would be

32. Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Eighty-Seventh Congress, Second Session, HR 9900, The Trade Expansion Act of 1962, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1962.

hurt by increased imports, while plugging for a law which would allow those who must export to be able to compete in world markets. The Secretary of Defense, as custodian of the purchasing power of \$50,000,000,000 appeared to enlighten the committee on the relationship between national security and foreign trade. The Secretary of the Treasury brought up the problem of the gold outflow and the balance of payments problem, while the Secretary of State arrived with all the implications of foreign policy as affected by foreign economic involvement fairly tumbling over themselves in a plethora of arguments in favor of an effective act which would allow the President flexibility, and power in dealing with increasingly independent, wealthy, and self-sufficient allies and friends, with particular reference to the European Common Market, which was fumbling toward, in spite of all our efforts, a protectionist policy which threatened to close off or diminish our access to the richest market in the world with the exception of our own domestic establishment.

Among the non-governmental persons who appeared, might have been found a cross section of America. The Committee patiently heard them all, and then reported out the law which finally became the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. It was as much a statement of long range foreign policy as a speech by the Secretary of State, or a treaty with one of our allies.

Section 102 is called, "Statement of Purpose."

"The purposes of this act are, through trade agreements affording mutual trade benefits-

(1) to stimulate the economic growth of the United States and maintain and enlarge foreign markets for

the products of United States agriculture, industry, mining and commerce;

(2) to strengthen economic relations with foreign countries through the development of open and non-discriminatory trading in the free world; and

(3) to prevent Communist economic penetration." 33

The Act is a considerable advance over former Trade Agreement laws in many ways. It gives the President great powers of raising and lowering tariffs in agreement with others, and it extends his powers for five years, so that the law and the President will have a chance to prove themselves, even though a hue and cry may be raised over some specific action which may be taken under the act.

Section 252 is of particular interest, because it represents a departure from the "most favored nation" principle in cases where discriminatory policies against our agricultural products can be "retaliated against" only by raising tariffs on the offender's industrial products. Sections 301 through 330 provide means for lessening the adverse effects of increased imports on sections of the economy or population, which include, financial assistance to those harmed, tax relief, technical assistance, labor re-training, allowances to displaced workers, and relocation assistance.

Section 243, which might have been expected to draw some protest from the administration was accepted with hardly a murmur. It provides for two Senators and two Representatives to be members of the negotiating team that negotiates agreements under the act. Ought the Executive Branch to have cried "Foul!" relying on traditional separation of powers, or did someone learn from the past?

33. Public Law 87-794, 87th Congress, HR. 11970, October 11, 1962, The Trade Expansion Act of 1962.

One is reminded of the speculation that if President Wilson had taken Senator Henry Cabot Lodge to Paris with him, the United States might have joined the League of Nations, and once again, trapped in "might have beens," World War II might not have happened.

One might well say that this is a very difficult way to make foreign policy, and that any totalitarian state could have produced the same law without so much sweat, strain and effort. Democracies take months to make up their minds, they hedge their bets with restrictive clauses, they have to take into consideration the interests of special groups, and the national interest of the state is not so well served as it might be, if the interests of the state are paramount, and the people, with all their manifold wants, needs and desires can be essentially ignored.

There is no answer to this except that perhaps we can afford to be a democracy, and others cannot. Lord Bertrand Russell calls our experiment, "The American Way of Life."³⁴ Most of us have more than a passing interest in its preservation. It is appropriate to ask, as does this essay, whether we can afford a democratic form of government, and still survive, accepting the fact that if we cannot pursue an effective foreign policy, survival is impossible.

Perhaps we are cast upon the horns of a dilemma. If we wish to remain a democracy, we cannot have an effective foreign policy, and if we do not have an effective foreign policy we will not survive. Thus we must choose between abandoning the "American Way of Life" for the present, because the world in which we live

34. Russell, op. cit., p. 6

will not allow us to have our cake and eat it too. I don't think we are so driven to a choice so limited. One may grant that in certain situations, the necessity to work through democratic processes is a handicap, but to abandon our way of life for some other alternative is to set a course through uncharted seas, toward an ill-defined shore, with the promise that the voyage, at least in the times we shall know, may not be worth the effort.

On that gloomy note, perhaps I may be allowed to abandon my role as defender of democracy for the moment, and contrast the success of the Trade Expansion Act, with the ordeal of Adlai Stevenson during the Cuban Crisis of 1962.

In the now famous article in the Saturday Evening Post of December 8, 1962, Stewart Alsop and Charles Bartlett accused Adlai Stevenson of "Wanting a Munich" because he allegedly brought up the possibility of trading our obsolete missile bases in Italy and Turkey for a missile free Cuba.³⁵ The disturbing thing of course, was not that such a proposal was made, or discussed, or even that it was a good or bad idea under the circumstances. The truly disturbing aspect is that it should have been considered improper to have considered this as one alternative, or more properly, as a possible course of action. Stevenson may have been doing some thinking. He was entitled to a hearing, as well as those who may have suggested a massive invasion, or a flight of bombers over the Soviet Union.

35. Stewart Alsop and Charles Bartlett, In Time of Crisis, Saturday Evening Post, December 8, 1962, p. 20

This tendency of Americans to think that only the aggressive and the strong, the violent and the intransigent can be patriotic, or have the best interests of the United States at heart is more than disturbing. It is a reminder of our immaturity. DeTocqueville talked long ago about the tyranny of the majority as being one of the weaknesses of democracy in America.³⁶ The villification of Stevenson for having presented a "Dove" position in a room full of "Hawks" is a problem we haven't yet solved.

When the Luce publications leaped to Ambassador Stevenson's defense, they made more of a point that he probably hadn't proposed the swap at all than that he had a right and a duty to make a serious proposal of this nature. Time Magazine, in their sweeping attack on the Saturday Evening Post's "Irresponsible Journalism" brushed the periphery of the problem saying:

"Aside from some demonstrable inaccuracies in the story, the whole hawk-dove theme was a vast oversimplification. In an effort to examine all possibilities, everyone at the executive committee meetings offered ideas that they were not willing to live or die by. That was the advisors function- and the final decisions were the President's."³⁷

Time was of course concerning itself with the possibility that Charles Bartlett, a crony of the President, was being used to ease Ambassador Stevenson out of his post at the United Nations, and not particularly with the real need for advisors and decision makers to bring up the unpleasant as well as the palatable when vital issues are being discussed.

Things that are discussed behind closed doors in the

36. De Tocqueville, op. cit., p. 114

37. The Stranger on the Squad, Time Magazine, Vol. LXXX., No. 24, December 14, 1962, p. 18.

Executive Branch, are not often "leaked" as was apparent in the Stevenson case. Presumably there will be more care taken in the future in any case. Still there are some other things that are essentially undiscussable in the United States. Recognition of Red China might be taken as a case in point. I don't think it is beyond imagining that it might be in the interests of the United States to recognize Red China at some future time. If anyone who proposes to discuss the question with any hint that the affirmative, is within the realm of possibility, he had better look to his security clearance, and examine the sins of his past life if any, because they are in danger of exposure. The terror of the McCarthy era is not completely past even if the Atomic Energy Commission has seen fit to rescue some part of the reputation of J. Robert Oppenheimer by awarding him the "Enrico Fermi Award" for his contributions both to theoretical physics and to the use of atomic energy.³⁸

Max Lerner has been quoted as saying:

"Even in the case of the loyalty hunts and the search for 'subversives,' the effective stimulus has not been majority hysteria but a cold campaign by pressure groups in the hunt for some particular quarry. A new feature on the landscape of American power is the 'veto group', which pretends to act in the name of the majority but actually terrorizes it."³⁹

Once again we have raised a problem which is not susceptible of easy solution. There is definitely a danger in being a true non-conformist in America, as distinguished from a bearded

38. The New Yorker, April 20, 1963, p. 35.

39. Max Lerner, Veto Groups and Majority Tyranny, in The Voice of the People, Leo M. Christenson and Robert O. McWilliams eds., p. 264.

conformist who steps to the sound of an "institutionalized" different drummer, and whose unusualness is a form of conformity itself. One must and does step with care in areas where the veto groups have staked out their claims, or mass opinion has crystallized. Our democracy may be the weaker for it.

Still one wonders if we have met the question posed in our subject head on. If one grants that the phenomenon of democracy was not necessarily responsible for all the failures in foreign policy in the past on the part of the countries which embraced its principles, and if one grants that on occasion, democracies are capable of conceiving and executing long range and complicated plans in foreign affairs such as the "European Recovery Plan", is our answer to the question posed by this essay topic to be an unqualified, "No. Democratic government and effective foreign policy are not irreconcilable?"

I don't feel that an unqualified "No" has been supported as yet. We might answer, "No, these things are not irreconcilable if..." I propose to consider some of these if's now. I proposed three requirements for a mature and effective democracy in the earlier portion of this work. They can be translated into ifs.

If we achieve a high level of participation by those who are capable of understanding the aims and aspirations of the United States, if we develop and choose competent leaders, and if we recognize that there are some things we cannot do, either domestically or in foreign policy, we need not conclude that democratic government and an effective foreign policy are irreconcilable. These are my subjective judgments, but they are

not entirely unsupported by concurring opinion.

Kenneth Thompson in his "Political Realism and the Crisis in World Politics has said:

"...we find also in history examples of leaders who pierced the veil of the future, who foresaw the course of history more clearly than their contemporaries... Despite modern ingenuity in contriving devices to replace superior human judgment, no substitute has been found for practical wisdom, nor a Univac to replace unique moral and intellectual endowments."⁴⁰

I agree with Mr. Thompson, that even in a democracy we must depend to a large degree on the wisdom of unusual men. We have not always raised them to a position of power in our society. Indeed, Odegard and Rosenblum in their selection of readings in "American Government" include a passage from M. Ostrogorski in which he states:

"Yet when you carry your thoughts back to the scene which you have just witnessed and review the line of presidents, you find that if they have not all been great men-far from it- they were all honorable men; and you cannot help repeating the American saying, 'God takes care of drunkards, of little children, and of the United States.'⁴¹

Yet it would be a mistake to assume that only the office of the President requires morality or greatness. There is a need for men of the highest type in all the councils of government, and when there are no longer enough willing to go to Washington, and sacrifice their Presidency of the Ford Motor Company, or their endowed chair at a university, then the republic is in great peril. There is a time to go to Washington, but there is also a time to be willing to go home, as Barbara Tuchman points out in her portrait

40. Kenneth W. Thompson, Political Realism and the Crisis in World Politics, Princeton University Press, pp. 5-7

41. M. Ostrogorski, A Critical View of the Convention System, in Peter H. Odegard and Victor Rosenblum, Documents and Readings, American Government, p. 95.

of Thomas B. Reed, Speaker of the House of Representatives in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

"If he retained his office as Speaker his duty would be to carry the administration's program through the house against his private convictions. To stand by his convictions meant opposing the will of the majority. This time there was only one way out.... In April 1899, after the close of the Fifty-fifth Congress he startled the political world with the announcement that he would not be a candidate for reelection as speaker, and shortly afterwards, to cap the sensation, he announced he would not run again for Congress."⁴²

Not very many politicians resign from the government over principle these days. To step aside gracefully is not in the program of men who have grown old in their sinecure. The possession of power is stronger wine than that provided by money or social position. And yet there is room at the top for the best.

Professor Hans Morgenthau lends some additional support for my proposition that men, as well as institutions and forms of government are essential to effective foreign policy, or for failures of foreign policy for that matter. He says:

"The ups and downs of British power are closely connected with changes in the quality of British diplomacy. Cardinal Woolsey, Castlereagh, and Canning signify the summits of British diplomacy as well as of British power, while Lord North and Neville Chamberlain stand for the decline of both."⁴³

Men, always men, fettered perhaps by some of the institutions, but more frightened of the people than they need be, and responsible

⁴². Barbara Tuchman, Czar of the House, American Heritage, Volume XIV, Number 1, December 1962, p. 102.

⁴³. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, p. 141.

for leading, not fearing public opinion, or any other hob-goblin which seems to stand in their way may be the answer to our problems.

On the subject of great men Lord Bertrand Russell, who may be a bit discredited now because of his wholehearted espousal of "peace at any price", had some rather sound remarks to make.

"I cannot think of anything that mankind has gained by the existence of Jenghis Kahn. I do not know what good came of Robespierre, and for my part, I see no reason to be grateful to Lenin. But all these men, good and bad alike, had a quality which I should not wish to see disappear from the world—a quality of energy and personal initiative, or independence of mind, and of imaginative vision."⁴⁴

It is difficult to disagree with Lord Russell in this.

Individuals do not seem to come along so often now, and when they do, they are stifled by a society so highly organized that the talents of the individual must be channelled, or he must be forced to specialize if he is to get on in the world. The required generation of generalists, of men able to develop vision and foresight, of those who are grounded in the tradition of Western civility, of Walter Lippman's "Public Philosophy" perhaps, are small in number. It is necessary to ask whether democracy has caused this decline, or if the answer lies elsewhere, in "The Organizational Society" perhaps, a phenomenon not confined to democracies. Robert Presthuis discusses the "upward mobiles" or young men who are going to get ahead in these terms,

"To avoid controversial matters, to create an aura of unlimited friendship, and to borrow status by discreet name dropping may appear rather negative

⁴⁴. Russell, op. cit., p. 32.

but these are significant criteria in the bureaucratic situation where 'personality' and 'working with the team' are vital...By taking a firm stand on practically anything, the individual may alienate someone and thus jeopardize a career potential. The costs of the resulting conformity may be high."⁴⁵

Part of our problem may lie here, and I think it is safe to say that this bureaucratization is not necessarily to be charged as a private sin of democracy. Big nations are almost inevitably highly organized; with organization comes conformity; with conformity comes the loss of individuality and independence of mind; with these losses over a period of time is likely to come the decline of the society. This is of course a gross oversimplification, but it is symptomatic of the fact that, easy as it is to criticize democracy, it ought not to be made a universal scapegoat for our failures, in foreign policy, or in any other area of enterprise or endeavor.

The danger that lies in putting the blame on democracy as such, is inherent in the reaction I described in my earlier pages. We are committed to democracy with all its imperfections and weaknesses. We aren't about to give it up. Then if democracy can be made to bear the blame for our failures, and we cannot reform democracy without changing its nature and the "American Way of Life", which we are not willing to do, we are presented with a ready made excuse for failure, for not doing anything to improve our position or our policies. If democracy is a sacred cow, and is a scapegoat

45. Robert Presthus, The Organizational Society, p. 188.

as well, how is change and improvement possible? What is the point of striving, if the chosen fetters of democracy are going to negate all our actions? Why thrust and reach for the moon if we have fallen in love with our chains?

What has been frustrating to me, in reading the critics and commentators in the field of political science is the constant underlying implication of many that democracy is a sort of sluggish, inefficient, unwieldy, unworkable thing, perhaps a passing experiment, too expensive for anyone but the United States to make a go of, and eventually doomed to abandonment when its inadequacies for dealing with the age of advanced technology are sufficiently demonstrated. No one of course comes right out and says it. One does not slaughter sacred cows; one hopes they will die of their own accord. I struggle to make clear that I do not think that democracy has the mark of Cain on it; that I think the imperfections of a given society are not to be attributed solely to their democratization, but the failures of men to work within a perfectly reasonable framework, which is at least as easily adjustable to changing technology and world-shrinking as any other form of government or social organization. There are no excuses to be found in statements which imply that an effective course of action was not possible because it was a democracy which was required to make the decision.

We are not alone in the rise of the phenomenon of conformity and the decline of individualism. I think it is encouraging that we are still making somewhat of a struggle out of the process. Our

monolithic adversary seems to be laboring under no such handicap. There is no question in my mind that emulation of our seemingly successful adversary is not the solution to our problems. In a recent interview, Premier Khrushchev defended his slapping down of Evgeny Bvtushenko and other Russian individualists in this manner:

"When several representatives of the new generation of our writers and painters, directed on the new road of post war art, proved to have fallen in determined errors, we sat at the table with them and spoke with open heart. This was to help these representatives of literature and art and offer them the possibility of putting all their talent to the service of the people."⁴⁶

It is obvious that there is going to be no public opinion imposing a massive negative on the policies of the Soviet Union. There is not going to be allowed even one small voice raised in protest over their mistakes of the past, or their plans for the future. The leaders of the Soviet Union are not going to have to take into consideration the interests of special groups in the society. They are free to formulate their effective foreign policy if they are equal to the task.

But may we not remind ourselves that being unfettered by democracy does not insure that a totalitarian state will be any more omnipotent in foreign affairs than the democracies of the West have proved to be.

The Soviet Union has the bomb, the Chinese do not. Still the Soviet Union has been less successful than we in forcing or

46. The New York Times, Western Edition, April 22, 1963.

persuading her largest ally to conform to her policies, and accept her judgment and leadership in the communist offensive. Can we accuse the Soviet Union of being unable to come to terms with force? I think that would be the last accusation to be made of them, but with all the force at their command, they are powerless to accomplish some things in foreign affairs. If we grant that some of their aims may be legitimately frustrated, is it not unreasonable to expect that our efforts will be crowned with an unbroken string of successes.

It might be of interest to compare the implications of Premier Khrushchev's plan to put all the talents of his artists at the service of the people, and if they refuse to conform, tear up their union card,⁴⁷ with President Kennedy and Secretary of State Rusk's plan for utilizing American talent in foreign affairs, and improving this use by establishing a National Academy of Foreign Affairs. In his letter to the President of the Senate, transmitting the bill to the Congress for action the President said:

"Finally, it (the Academy) would not propagate any single doctrine or philosophy about the conduct of foreign affairs. Such an institution can serve the cause of freedom only as it embodies the spirit of freedom, and it can fulfill its mission only by meeting the best standards of intellectual excellence and academic freedom. The Academy is intended to enable faculty and students of the highest quality to focus our collective experience and knowledge on the issues most vital to the advancement of our national purpose."⁴⁸

Now incomprehensible such a plan as this must seem to the

47. Russia, Time Magazine, Vol. LXXI, No. 16, Apr. 19, 1963, p. 40.

48. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XLVIII, No. 1239, March 25, 1963, p. 428.

Soviet mind. There is no room in their society for more than one doctrine or philosophy about the conduct of foreign affairs. If their method is better for achieving unanimity, and for arriving at decisions without the necessity of debate, is it necessarily more efficient than our system, and will it inevitably lead to a more effective foreign policy than we are able laboriously to evolve? We are committed to the proposition that many voices should be heard, and many avenues of approach should be considered, and that individual men still count for something. When we speak of the people, it is not in their corporate institutionalized form, indistinguishable from the state, but as a mass of individuals whose rights and freedoms are to be encroached on, only to the minimum required for survival, not to the maximum attainable short of the degree which might lead to revolution.

I do not mean to say that I refuse to live in a society where I do not have absolute freedom, or perhaps license as distinguished from freedom. I am perfectly willing to give up whatever degree of freedom necessary to the formulation and execution of an effective foreign policy. The millions who serve in the armed forces and other agencies of government give up a considerable degree of freedom cheerfully. But I am not prepared to admit that I am forced to make a decision between a democratic form of government and an effective foreign policy. They have not, and cannot be shown to be mutually exclusive.

The Government of the United States is perfectly capable of keeping a secret when it must. The "Manhattan Project" which

produced the first atomic bomb is an excellent example. The weekend preceeding the announcement of the Cuban Blockade in current history is another example. It is not a requirement of democratic government that a plebiscite be held to determine if the United States was going to invade, blockade, or accept the presence of offensive missiles in Cuba. It is the function of a democracy to debate long range policy with regard to a continuing menace represented by a hostile government ninety miles away. If the "Bay of Pigs" was a mistake, it should be examined so that mistakes similar to it are not made in the future. A democracy can afford to admit that it may have made a mistake. If mistakes are never exposed, how are we to learn from them? Is not this peculiarity of a democratic government, that it has critics, and is forced to hear them, even if it does not heed them, an advantage, rather than a disadvantage over the long run?

James Bryce, writing in 1889 put his finger on the advantages of maintaining a vociferous minority in a democracy in his classic, "The American Commonwealth."

"Where a majority has erred, (we might substitute government) the only remedy against the prolongation or repetition of its error is in the continued protests and agitation of the minority, an agitation which ought to be peaceably conducted, carried on by voice and pen, but which must be vehement enough to rouse the people and deliver them from the consequences of their blunders."⁴⁹

James Bryce goes on to say, "In a free country...ten men who care, are worth a hundred who do not."⁵⁰ In this brief statement

⁴⁹. James Bryce, Further Safeguards Against Majority Tyranny, Excerpt from, The American Commonwealth, in Rec N. Christenson and Robert O. McWilliams, op. cit., p. 259

⁵⁰. Ibid., p. 250

may be found part of the hope for democratic governments, and their foreign policies. Bertrand Russell describes the reaction of the individual in the tighter social systems of modern times as being one of despair. The little man according to Russell feels that the part one citizen can obtain in controlling policy is usually infinitesimal, and he feels that it is better in the circumstances to forget public affairs and get as much enjoyment by the way as the times permit.⁵¹ It is a form of fiddling while Rome burns, and the orchestra is large. The Athenians would say along with Pericles that such men had no business in a democracy at all. And so many in a democracy are like unto Lord Russell's example.

My answer might take some such form as this. So What! We don't want the entire mass of the people cluttering up the debate anyway. The answer is flip, and not really serious, but it contains some element of truth. The great mass of the people in a large democratic country cannot participate in the debate which is necessary for deciding questions of policy. They will be heard on some matters, but only when they are led, in some mysterious way, not to be explained by influences of mass media, or the legerdemain of Madison Avenue. In large part, except for questions which affect their vital interests, the people are content to let the administration govern, and thus stable government is achieved. And even when incensed over an issue, their interest is short lived, and cannot be sustained over any great period of time, unless events

51. Russell, op. cit., p. 18-9.

conspire to keep the issue alive and before the public.

The foregoing remarks are based on V. O. Key's valiant attempt to make some sense out of American electoral behavior.

With considerably more caution than I have demonstrated he produces such tentative conclusions as:

"The data suggest that the generation of support for and adequate American foreign policy may depend on the maintenance of a relatively high level of domestic prosperity. As the number of persons pinched economically increases, so does the number disposed toward withdrawal into our national shell. This is not to say that the poor and distressed rise up in isolationist anger, but only that when such people feel threatened, political leaders with their own axes to grind can stir them against involvement abroad."⁵²

Key is of course quite correct in relating the domestic economy to foreign involvements, but he does not attribute to the people in any way, the massive veto decried by Walter Lippman, but only a susceptibility to be swayed when in peril, by leadership which may not be responsible, and which may itself be misled. Infallibility is not claimed for the combination of the people en-masse and their leaders in a continuous dialogue. In fact the condition Key describes is not one of a dialogue at all, but a monologue directed at a pre-sold audience.

We have perhaps neglected the proper role of the thinking minority of the people in the maintenance of a viable democracy, which is not incapable of formulating and carrying out an effective foreign policy. The percentage of persons who do not feel a

52. Key, *op. cit.* p. 163.

responsibility for knowing what is going on is extremely large. In the community of persons who speak, write, and think about these problems, the consciousness of this great apathy may not always be clear. An incredible number of people simply don't want to know, and would much prefer the sports page to be the front page of their daily newspaper, followed by entertainment news, amusing columnists who don't require deep thought to follow, and perhaps an expose or two of Elizabeth Taylor's latest adventure with Richard Burton. Except at election time, these people largely do not matter.

The persons who do matter are rather hard to identify and to classify, and even more important, understand. I have found the problem stated nowhere more succinctly again than in V. C. Key,

"The argument amounts essentially to the position that the masses do not corrupt themselves; if they are corrupt, they have been corrupted. If this hypothesis has a substantial strain of validity, the critical element for the health of a democratic order consists in the beliefs, standards and competence of those who constitute the influentials, the opinion leaders, the political activists in the order. That group, as has been made plain, refuses to define itself with great clarity in the American system; yet analysis after analysis points to its existence. If a democracy tends toward indecision, decay, and disaster, the responsibility rests here, not in the mass of the people."⁵³

If there is no dialogue between the masses of the people and their leaders, except at election time, and the people's part of the dialogue largely consists of their answers to the questions posed by the pollers of public opinion, there does still exist a continuing dialogue between the influentials, the opinion leaders,

53. Key, op. cit., p. 558

the political activists, and the government. There is discussion within and among these groups, and their opinions are available to the government. The 1,850 persons and organizations who chose to express their opinions on the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 are a case in point.

The many suggestions that the level of discussion must be raised are solidly reasoned, and are not to be denied. The methods are still in doubt. The newspapers, with notable exception have abdicated a large part of their responsibility. Formerly respectable magazines of small or mass circulation, squeezed for advertising revenue by television are tailoring their product more and more to entertainment than information, to sensationalism, more than reporting in depth; they do not provide an adequate forum for serious discussion.

Examination of the new "slick" format of "The Nation," "The Saturday Review," the slipping "Atlantic Monthly," the yellow cover of "Harpers"⁵⁴ devoted to Alcoholics Anonymous, the steady decline of news and editorial coverage in daily newspapers, and even the concentrated criticism of the good grey New York Times,⁵⁵ makes one wonder if our stated aim of raising the level of discussion is not being frustrated by the changes which are taking place in the traditional forums.

David Suskind's "Open End" does not seem to be an adequate replacement for what we have lost, or are in the process of losing,

⁵⁴. Harpers Magazine, Vol. 226, No. 1353, February 1963.

⁵⁵. Dwight Macdonald, The New York Times, Alas, Esquire, Vol. LIX, Nos. 4 and 5, April and May, 1963.

and in spite of the efforts of the public affairs departments of the television networks, an audio-visual program is an ephemeral thing and is not well calculated to take the place of the printed word.

But perhaps I make the charge of sensationalism too lightly; there are some pretty sensational things to discuss in our thermo-nuclear age. As an example I might cite a long footnote in Herman Kahn's "Thinking About the Unthinkable." He describes one sensational subject that I had long wanted to hear discussed. Since I was 18 years old in the last year of our nuclear monopoly, and was not thinking much about wars, (everybody knew there were at least twenty years between major wars), I could not say that there had been no discussion of ways and means of maintaining it at the time. I was simply an apathetic young American male who didn't want to know bad enough to find out.

But later I wondered if anyone of stature had considered, when it became obvious that the Soviet Union was not going to cooperate in the post-war world, the possibility of imposing the "Pax Americana" on the world with the credible threat of our atomic bombs, and a delivery system like SAC to wield it. In other words, when we were in a position to retain our nuclear monopoly by force, was there any tough thinker around to which the solution, (unthinkable as it might have been) occurred?

Of all people, Lord Bertrand Russell!

On page 235 of Herman Kahn's admirable small book is the story from the London Observer of Lord Russell speaking to 408

London students and schoolteachers at a New Commonwealth Schools Conference.

"Either we must have a war against Russia before she has the atom bomb or we will have to lie down and let them govern us...

"Before they were tempted to paralyze any war effort, trade unionists in Western countries should be taught that the Soviet way of life had nothing to offer them. Fearing the horror of a future war was no way to prevent it. 'Anything is better than submission,' he said."⁵⁶

If we hear and see a different Bertrand Russell now, it might be well to hark back to his speech to the schoolteachers. Nobody listened to him then, we lost our nuclear monopoly, and the war he envisaged with both sides having the bomb, and a vastly more destructive bomb to the one he was thinking about, has become a real possibility. Faced with a situation he had tried to forestall, he has, fifteen years later, the courage of his convictions then. If he is pictured in our popular press as a pitiable figure, a senile, doddering old fool, sitting on the ground in Trafalgar Square, or Piccadilly Circus, with the fuzzy thinkers, and the unwashed rabble, to protest the presence of Polaris submarines in Holy Loch, it might be well to remember him as he was then, a prophet who counselled retention of our monopoly of atomic weapons, or surrender.

I sometimes wonder too, if after fourteen years of living in a world in which a supposedly implacable enemy holds the power of our total destruction, while we oppose him with more of the same,

56. Kahn, Thinking About the Unthinkable, op. cit., p. 235

we are ready to think about the implications of the possession of some sort of ultimate weapon, perhaps not in the class of high explosives at all. I wonder if we are prepared to discuss seriously retaining a monopoly of such a weapon, even if we have to risk killing millions to do it. I wonder if we have really "come to terms with force," as Kenneth Thompson phrases it.⁵⁷

In spite of some misgivings I have not abandoned the position taken in the earlier portion of this paper. I do not think that viable democratic government and an effective foreign policy are irreconcilable aims. I think the history of the recent past is more encouraging than the more distant past. I see hope in the fact that writers like Herman Kahn and T. R. Feherenbach, in his new book, "This Kind of War,"⁵⁸ are rescuing the Korean encounter from the myth which had grown up around it, that it was an American defeat from which we gained nothing.

I am encouraged by the fact that, although one is inundated by stories of the ineffectiveness of our intervention in the "Dirty Little War"⁵⁹ in Viet Nam, there has been no swell of public opinion demanding that we get out and bring the boys back home. The people have shown a willingness to accept five years as a reasonable forecast of our involvement, with no real assurances that we will win a famous victory. There is even evidence that we will win a famous victory. There is even evidence that we are developing some understanding that in a nuclear age, one does not

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57. Thompson, op. cit., p. 207

58. T. R. Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, The MacMillan Co., New York, 1963.

59. Jerry A. Rose, I'm Hit! I'm Hit! Saturday Evening Post, Volume 236, Number 11, March 23, 1963, p. 34.

back his opponent into a corner from which there is no escape short of total war or abject surrender. Surely this is political maturity of the highest order, and it is being evidenced in a democracy which lets Barry Goldwaters, Joseph Welches, and William F. Buckley's have their say.

I am not prepared to predict with any assurance that democracy will survive the experience of existence in a world dominated by the threat of the bomb. As war approaches more closely, power tends to concentrate in the government, and democratic institutions lose some of their essential characteristics. Involvement in a finite number of small limited wars may tend to have the same effect. We may not consciously abandon democratic government; we may just let it slip through our fingers. I am personally convinced that this would be a step backward for the Western democracies, but I am not prepared to say that it will constitute an irrevocable disaster. The ideas, and ideals of democracy, ill defined as they may be, meaning different things to different men, but appealing in many ways to the majority of men, will survive, and revive if there is a world surviving in which they may exist. The organization of society is both a revolutionary and an evolutionary process. Democracy would seem to be a necessary stage in the faltering march of humanity toward true harmony and justice in the relations between man and man. I don't think we should abandon it lightly, even for the sake of a conviction that the elusive aim of an effective foreign policy is being hampered by some of its ill-defined imperfections.

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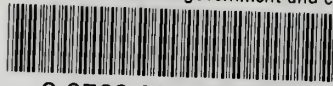
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