

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

controversy that persists to this day, writes Gaddis, an Ohio State University historian. Nevertheless, he contends, recently declassified government documents as well as the partially opened Kennan papers rebut both conventional liberal and conservative interpretations of Kennan's containment theory.

Those who define containment as purely responsive to Communist strategy have criticized Kennan for placing the initiative in Moscow's hands. Other analysts have faulted Kennan for allegedly urging an "all-out commitment" to bar Communist advances in *any* part of the globe. Still others have assailed containment for its lack of discrimination between "Communism" and "Soviet expansion," thus delaying U.S. rapprochement with China and other Communist states.

Gaddis concedes containment's "passivity" but sharply rejects other criticisms of Kennan as ill-informed. As early as 1948, he notes, Kennan advocated neutrality in the Chinese civil war and withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea. Moreover, Kennan criticized rather than encouraged U.S. official tendencies to regard Communism as monolithic instead of "polycentric." His suggestion that Marshall Plan aid be offered to Eastern Europe reflected his belief in the intrinsic diversity among Communist-run nations. Gaddis's conclusion: Kennan's containment proposal involved a far more subtle, dynamic, and discriminating policy than most of its critics (and supporters) were able to comprehend.

Can a Nuclear War Be Won?

"Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War" by Richard Pipes, in *Commentary* (July 1977), 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Since World War II, U.S. nuclear analysts (among them, U.S. SALT negotiator Paul Warnke) have rejected the view of Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) that war is simply politics pursued by other means. But the Russians, says Harvard historian Pipes, have not dismissed Clausewitz so easily.

Characterizing Soviet strategy as "primitive" overlooks important differences between the two superpowers, Pipes contends. American strategy, fashioned by civilians rather than by the military, views a resort to violence as a failure of policy and nuclear war as madness because neither side can win. This view, reinforced by the "fiscal imperatives" introduced in the 1950s and '60s by John Foster Dulles as Secretary of State and Robert McNamara as Secretary of Defense, has led American policymakers to conclude that the U.S. nuclear stance must be to avert, rather than win, a nuclear war. Thus was born the doctrine of "massive retaliation," whereby the United States hoped to deter a Russian "first strike" by threatening an instant, devastating U.S. "second strike."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The Kremlin, Pipes argues, views nuclear war not only as possible but also as possible to win. Twenty million dead in World War II alone (U.S. dead in all wars since 1775 are estimated at one million) and a political system based on struggle have inured Moscow to the threat of heavy losses. Russian strategy, keyed to the politically powerful Red Army and formulated by the military, grafts nuclear weaponry onto an overall offensive and defensive plan that avoids sole reliance on any "absolute weapon." A sophisticated civil defense program has been designed to safeguard political and military leaders, industrial managers, and skilled workers in the event of war.

"There is something innately destabilizing in the very fact that we consider nuclear war unfeasible and suicidal for both," writes Pipes, "and our chief adversary views it as feasible and winnable for himself." In the SALT negotiations, he warns, the key question is *intent*: The success of deterrence is possible only if the United States understands "Soviet war-winning strategy."

Li Hung-Chang's Sleight of Hand

"Li Hung-Chang's Mission to America, 1896" by Gerald G. Eggert, in *The Midwest Quarterly* (Spring 1977), Kansas State College, Pittsburg, Kans. 66762.

The tour of Western Europe and the United States in 1896 by Li Hung-Chang, "stern-and-resolute Earl of the first rank" and the most senior Imperial Chinese official ever to visit the West, was interpreted by his hosts as a signal that Peking, stung by the recent Sino-Japanese War, was eager to make political and commercial deals to protect and modernize its faltering empire.

While Li's visit differs significantly from recent U.S.-Chinese contacts, writes Eggert, a historian at Pennsylvania State University, it showed "how far fancy can be, and has been, divorced from reality in East-West contacts."

After representing his Emperor at Tsar Nicholas II's coronation in St. Petersburg, Li undertook an extended trip through Europe and the United States. Despite a series of high-level receptions designed to win his favor, no deals were made. American historians have argued nonetheless that Li's visit altered the Cleveland administration's commercial policy toward China and kindled interest in the China trade.

Actually, Eggert writes, the significance of Li's eight-month tour lies in the treaty he first concluded with the Russians, giving them right of way across Manchuria for the Trans-Siberian Railway in return for a mutual defense pact against Japan. Li's subsequent tour of the West, Eggert speculates, was undertaken simply to maintain the diplomatic balance. Peking wished neither to alienate the Western powers (especially its old ally, England) nor to create an image of Chinese dependence on the Russians.