

# CURRENT BOOKS

## FELLOWS' CHOICE

*Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows of the Wilson Center*

---

**GERMANY AND THE  
UNITED STATES:  
A "Special Relationship?"**

by Hans W. Gatzke  
Harvard, 1980  
314 pp. \$17.50

During the last two centuries, peacetime relations between the United States and Germany have vacillated between cordiality and mistrust. The present-day alliance is no exception—with its frictions over energy policy (Americans consume twice as many BTU's per capita as the West Germans), over anti-inflation measures (Bonn has resisted U.S. promptings to stimulate its economy and increase the German market for U.S. goods), as well as the much-publicized Carter-Schmidt personality conflict. After World War II, the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic "miracle"), nurtured by the U.S. Marshall Plan, turned West Germany into the strongest economic power in Western Europe. Under Chancellors Willy Brandt (1969-74) and Helmut Schmidt, the Federal Republic has since begun to make clear its own stance on such key matters as Western relations with the Soviet bloc. (German *Ostpolitik* differs procedurally with some U.S. policy, advocating, for example, that arms-control talks with Russia precede significant military strengthening of NATO.) Ranging back in time to the first great influx of German immigrants to America during the 1850s, Yale historian Gatzke tends to view the U.S. side more kindly than he does Germany's. Unlike the Anglo-American bond, he contends, ties between Germany and the United States cannot be termed "special." But shared democratic ideals and growing anti-Communist feelings in West Germany make the occasionally testy Bonn-Washington friendship one of increasing "steadiness and reasonableness."

—Konrad H. Jarausch ('80)