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The Diplomats

Edward L. Killham

Martin Mayer

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tion. Komer's real world contrast between coalition defense and his maritime strategy is probably somewhat overstated. But, then, advocates must sometimes make their case larger than life.

JAN S. BREEMER
Reston, Virginia

Mayer, Martin. *The Diplomats*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday. 1983. 417pp. \$17.95

Martin Mayer has written an entertaining and informative book about the people who make up the diplomatic services of the world in the latter part of the twentieth century. The author, who has previously performed the same function for the denizens of Wall Street and Madison Avenue, as well as for lawyers and bankers, is not only a writer with an easy prose style, but a thorough researcher and an indefatigable interviewer as well. The publisher's claim that Mr. Mayer spent five years traveling to foreign ministries, embassies, consulates and agencies in twenty countries to compile this study is entirely credible. Along the way, the author met and eventually married a young lady who was then serving as a State Department official, a circumstance that can only have enhanced his understanding of how the American brand of diplomacy actually operates.

In *The Diplomats*, Mr. Mayer devotes special attention to the problems of training the young professionals. His coverage of two of the very few diplomatic academies which endeavor to do this for

foreigners, as well as their own nationals (Austria and Cameroon), is particularly interesting. There are, of course, many academic institutions in the United States and in Europe which offer a broad education to prospective diplomats, but Mr. Mayer focuses instead on technical training schools, which are designed to assist their students to apply their academic knowledge to dealing with the mechanisms and practices of modern diplomacy. In so doing, he demonstrates a high degree of empathy with the young people involved, particularly those from less developed nations. As a kind of by-product of his worldwide investigation of diplomacy, the author also provides two special case studies, one on the Foreign Agricultural Service of the United States and the other on the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Both are worthy of the attention given them and benefit from the sympathetic approach Mr. Mayer takes to their particular problems. The sections on multilateral diplomacy, as seen at the United Nations and in the Brussels headquarters of the European Community are also well worth reading.

Not surprisingly in a book of over 400 pages, there are a few items of unintentional misinformation as well as information. On organizational matters, these are with one exception all very minor. In that instance, however, Mr. Mayer comments on more than one occasion on what he considers to be the close relationship between Labor Attaches in American Embassies and the Central Intelligence Agency, via the AFL/CIO.

This is not only incorrect, but unfair and harmful to the Attaches. The AFL/CIO, to which the Attaches must be fully acceptable, is well aware of the damage that could be done to their effectiveness by any identification with intelligence activities. Accordingly, although as Mr. Mayer relates, the AFL/CIO is militantly anti-Communist, it is also militantly opposed to countenancing any association of "its Attaches" with an intelligence agency. One hopes that any future edition of this otherwise well conceived and well executed treatment of the diplomatic profession will correct this unfortunate misunderstanding.

Finally, from time to time Mr. Mayer feels called upon to pronounce on a number of current political and diplomatic controversies in ways that will not be applauded by all of his readers. At times his eagerness to let a breath of fresh air into stale arguments reveals perceptive insights into current realities. At other times, however, even a very felicitous style cannot conceal a less than complete understanding of the nature of the world's problems and the difficulties facing any serious efforts to resolve them.

Mr. Mayer's essays into more complicated policy dilemmas are no less open to critical analysis. The book remains, therefore, a curious mixture of perceptive insights and somewhat unrealistic suggestions for improvement. This is regrettable because his obvious lapses on some points tend to undermine his credibility on other, more limited matters,

where his off-beat advice is often well founded. The lively style in which the book is written contributes to this result, moreover, because Mr. Mayer—in his understandable desire to be readable—occasionally slides over from an engaging irreverence into the kind of snide remark that could make the serious reader take his views less seriously than they should be.

EDWARD L. KILLHAM
Naval War College

Barnet, Richard J. *The Alliance: America-Europe-Japan, Makers of the Postwar World*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983. 511pp. \$19.95

A brilliant analysis of global international relationships from the mid-1940s to the early 1980s, *The Alliance* is narrative political-economic history at its best, showing how the victorious United States shaped the postwar world by making defeated Germany and Japan into "protectorates" and exhausted Britain and France into virtual dependencies through the Nato system. Though the author is a master at weaving together the multifaceted story of this "alliance," he cannot decide whether it was preconceived, "surely one of the most ingenious political inventions of our century," or merely opportunistic, "a compromise between the liberal vision of a world economic order and . . . 'the gospel of national security.'"

His narrative tends to support the latter conclusion that, indeed, compromise became the (reluctant) *modus operandi* of the succession of US