

Evropská integrace: Plán USA na obranu západní Evropy před komunismem

Radim Brach

B.A. Dissertation Evaluation 2011

Radim Brach decided to write his B.A. dissertation on European integration as an American plan to defend Western Europe against Communism. I must admit that I generally find European integration to be a mundane topic, but this thesis represents an exception. First of all, Petr Anděl is an extraordinarily capable supervisor who knows the Cold War and American national security policy like the back of his hand. Secondly, Oldřich Tůma is a fine historian who has also helped Radim with his work. The work consists of an introduction, five main chapters, and a conclusion. Not only has Radim consulted published sources, but he has also listened to experts speak at the annual conference of the American Political Science Association. Radim deserves to be commended for this.

In the introduction, Radim clearly spells out the aim of the dissertation, which is to evaluate the role of the United States in the reconstruction of Europe and European integration after the war. The period involved is mainly from 1945 until 1952. I am overjoyed by the fact that the treatise is not riddled with useless, pretentious theories, but rather represents an independent analysis of the facts. I must say, however, that Radim's evaluation of the literature could be more extensive and that the introduction should be somewhat lengthier and discuss in greater detail the content of the individual chapters.

Chapter 1 provides essential historical background and is aptly entitled "From Independence to Internationalism." The isolationist years are well explained as is the

determination of American leaders after the Second World War not to repeat the mistakes made by their predecessors after the First World War. Radim correctly reminds the reader that Western European vulnerabilities, Soviet expansionist tendencies, and overall experience with Europe led the Americans to support European integration in the immediate postwar period.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the thorny issue of Germany. Radim recapitulates the well-known ideas of what should be done with Germany following the Second World War. The chapter correctly analyzes the activities of the main actors (Morgenthau, Marshall, Hoover) and ends with the acceptance of the Schuman Plan, based on Monnet's conceptions, which became the cornerstone for further European integration. Equally important was the American decision in 1950 to rearm partially West Germany.

Chapter 3 deals with the Truman Doctrine. The facts are properly presented, but Radim could have been more analytical here. I am afraid that this problem is also present elsewhere in the work.

Chapter 4 discusses the crucial issue of American economic assistance to Europe. All the crucial factors are not only described, but also analyzed. I daresay that this is the best chapter in the entire dissertation. The reasoning behind my opinion is that here Radim truly goes into detail and meticulously divides the chapter into sections, which give the reader a well-deserved break.

Chapter 5 deals with the matter of military assistance and the establishment of NATO. The final (second) section of this chapter gets to the crux of the matter, namely the

diplomatic footwork of getting some wary countries, mainly France, to agree to the admission of West Germany into NATO.

In the conclusion, Radim rightly argues that it was American pressure that ultimately resulted in once bitter enemies becoming partners in the European integration project. This is a typical example of how military, political, and economic security go hand in hand.

My overall impression is that the dissertation is a good one. However, I do have some criticisms. First of all, there is an inconsistent structure. Second, the introduction and some chapters could have been written in a more detailed manner. Third, encyclopedias should not be cited in works of this type. Fourth, there are a number of unfortunate typographical errors, particularly regarding dates. I recommend a **very good** mark.

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