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## The New Priesthood

C. M. Dughi  
*U.S. Navy*

Ralph E. Lapp

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provided. He does not think that a nuclear war will necessarily result in a holocaust or that a single nuclear explosion will trigger a large-scale nuclear war. Herman Kahn feels that the many shades of grey up and down the spectrum are distinctly more of a possibility than a nuclear spasm. He also believes that United States political and military planning is weak in this area. He suggests some important planning factors which should be addressed by our national planners. *On Escalation* is recommended for military and political readers because of the insight that it furnishes into the many military/political situations which might confront the United States in the future.

W.D. CLARK  
Colonel, U.S. Air Force

Lapp, Ralph E. *The New Priesthood*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965. 244 p.

In an age characterized by wholesale innovation, wherein startling breakthroughs no longer startle and in which the impossible is just around the next research corner, the emergence of a work on the elite of the era was inevitable and, indeed, by now, has been a long time coming. Happily, Mr. Ralph E. Lapp, who has stepped into the breach with his volume *The New Priesthood*, equipped as he is both as a scientist in his own right and as a successful man of business, appears to possess the necessary background to address his subject with depth and validity. In *The New Priesthood* Mr. Lapp suggests that the widespread preoccupation with, clamor for, and even dependence on, new advances in all fields of science, from the most trivial to the most significant, portends grave danger to the continuity of the American democratic process as we know it. His "new priests," the scientists, are likened, in an easily believable way, to the medicine men of tribal societies in that they tend to hold tight to their specialized knowledge and to the jargon of their profession in an effort to impress and to awe both the public and its elected officials in a manner readily reminiscent of the witch doctors with their masks, rattles, potions, and incantations. It is Mr. Lapp's fear that the new "priests," as a class, take advantage of their currently emphasized importance coupled with the aura of mystery in which they operate to garner unto themselves not only prestige but (and it is here that "threat" enters as a consideration) an over-proportionate share in government appropriations and in decision-making opportunities in areas in which they have neither the right nor the competence to speak. As the only work

of its kind up to the moment, and because of its obvious implications within the framework of national defense, *The New Priesthood* is particularly pertinent reading for military and naval officers as well as for all thinking individuals concerned with industry, government, or public affairs. It should, however, be viewed correctly as only one approach to a subject on which many facets remain unexplored. *The New Priesthood* is not a long book and is easy reading, but it should be perused critically and searchingly as well as open-mindedly.

C.M. DUGHI  
Commander, U.S. Navy

Lerche, Charles O., Jr. *The Cold War . . . and After*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965. 150 p.

In *The Cold War . . . and After*, Professor Lerche of American University has attempted a searching and dispassionate analysis of Soviet-American cold war relations since 1945. He concludes that the cold war as a historical era is drawing to a close and that relations between the two world giants, although destined to remain fiercely competitive for the foreseeable future, is gradually reverting to the classical concept of great power relationships of the type associated with the Congress of Vienna. The main thrust of the author's thesis supports the popular belief that while the international climate is still basically glacial, the antagonists are at last learning to adapt meaningfully to the vicissitudes of their environment and the pressures of each other's ambitions. The chapters dealing with the Soviet Union's grand strategy of "initiative" versus that of "response" or "reaction" by the United States are of particular value to the serious student of international affairs. In them Professor Lerche boldly addresses one of the most chronically galling questions concerning the conduct of American foreign policy: how could a nation which justifiably prides itself in the collective enterprise, flexibility, and initiative of its people become rigidly shackled to a defensive cold war posture? His theory suggests that the dead hands of the isolationist tradition coupled with a utopian view of the international scene imperceptibly molded our position in the early years of the conflict. The book, as befitting its serious subject matter, is not designed for casual reading. The occasional pedantic and redundant lapses are easily counterbalanced by the lucid exposition of ideas and convincing, well-supported discussions. In all, *The Cold War . . . and After* should prove to be a useful research source for the professional military officer.

W.J. WHITE  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine  
Corps