

## **VIOLA HERMS DRATH**

Director, Cyprus Peace Initiative Project

Viola Herms Drath has been a notable figure in German-American relations for over thirty years. An author, playwright, journalist, academic and diplomatic advisor, she left her native Germany when she married U.S. Army Colonel Francis S. Drath, another great American, then Deputy U. S. Military Governor of Bavaria, after World War II. Prior to her marriage, Viola had established herself as a young playwright in Munich. Her first play, *Farewell Isabell*, a comedy written at the age of 18 in the aftermath of the war, widely praised by the critics, signaled the beginning of a long, creative career.

As her career evolved in the United States, she became a longtime Washington correspondent for *Handelsblatt*, Germany's equivalent to the Wall Street Journal, and a member of the Executive Committee of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. Viola's insightful writings have helped Americans and Germans better understand post-war foreign policy. One of her articles for the National Committee entitled: "The Reemergence of the German Question" published in October 1988 proposed negotiations on German unification between the two German states and the four Allied Powers. As a foreign policy advisor to the 1988 Bush Presidential campaign, she helped lay the groundwork which led to the "2+4" process towards German unification in 1990.

Drath taught at American University and lectured at the University of Southern California. She received an M.A. in Philosophy and Germanic Literature from the University of Nebraska and has authored eight textbooks read in over 150 colleges and universities. Her articles and commentaries have appeared in major publications here and abroad.

The reissue of her biography of former German Chancellor Willy Brandt, "Willy Brandt: Prisoner of His Past", first published in 1975, coincided with Michael Frayn's play "*Democracy*." Dr. Henry A. Kissinger recently praised this biography by calling it "a must-read for those interested in fully appreciating an important statesman both within his own times and beyond."