

based on "common human values." But no thorough reassessment of policy was required. Sestanovich writes: "The language of 'interest,' by contrast, provided a framework in which unilateral Soviet actions—even unilateral concessions—might make sense." Such concessions came quickly, beginning with Gorbachev's December 1988 announcement of troop cutbacks in Europe.

That is only one sign of the astonishing "minimalism" that Sestanovich sees sweeping Soviet foreign-policy thinking. Thus, Andrei Kozyrev, a top Foreign Ministry official, wrote recently: "Our country has no interests justifying the use of military resources outside the borders of the socialist community." Politburo member

Aleksandr Yakovlev told *Der Spiegel* last year: "It is beyond my comprehension why one power should want to be more important than another."

A second result of the debate over the national interest is a new pluralism in policymaking. As disenchantment with the past deepens, the military is losing its dominant role.

Finally, the Soviets are more willing to defer to international opinion. As Shevardnadze said in 1988: "We cannot simply pretend that the norms and ideas of . . . civilized conduct in the world community do not concern us. If you want to be accepted in it, you have to observe them."

But Moscow is not going to withdraw into an isolationist shell. The question, Sestanovich says, is how will it define the national interest to make "a better fit with the needs of a post-imperial medium power." The challenge, he says, is parallel to the one France confronted after World War II, and perhaps the answer will be similar to the one provided by Charles de Gaulle. What would Soviet Gaullism mean? Maintenance of a limited nuclear deterrent; establishment of "special relationships" with other European nations (especially Germany); and a "residual role" in the Third World.

Still Crazy After All These Years

Noted in *National Review* (June 11, 1990):

UNESCO . . . has named Ho Chi Minh Man of the Century, "the symbol of the common struggles of people for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress."

The German Shadow

"One-and-a-half Cheers for German Unification" by Josef Joffe, in *Commentary* (June 1990), 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Just as every silver lining has its dark cloud, so the end of the Cold War has its ominous aspect: the reunification of Germany. One German-Jewish journalist worried recently that the new Germany "may become a strange and eerie place—perhaps even the source of a new wave of darkness spreading over the earth."

Joffe, the foreign editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper in Munich, offers partial reassurance. "Anybody reasoning forward from past disaster will be hard put to make the indictment stick," he writes. The West German legislators who were reported to have burst into *Deutsch-*

land über alles when the Berlin Wall was breached last November 9, he notes, were actually singing *Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit* (Unity, Justice, Freedom).

Joffe's larger point is that in Germany, as in the rest of the industrialized world, old-fashioned nationalism, the "murderous energy" that drove European history between 1789 and 1945, "isn't what it used to be." No longer do these nations go to war on the strength of a cry like "*Gott strafe England*" (May God Punish England). That energy has been extinguished by the memory of two world wars that left 70 million dead and by the knowledge that national

hubris in the nuclear age can be tantamount to national suicide.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Joffe continues, nationalism took an especially violent course in Germany, because economic modernization was not accompanied by democratization. A natural substitute for democracy was nationalism, "that wondrous 'political good' which is never scarce and which bestows psychic equality on rich and poor, on masters and servants alike." Furthermore, historical circumstances encouraged extreme nationalism. The Second Reich (1871-1919) was a latecomer to the Great Powers and often excluded; the Third Reich (1933-45) was the product of national humiliation and economic disaster. None of these historical parallels apply, Joffe maintains. And West Germany today is in some ways more democratic than France and Britain, which are, among other things, far more centralized than the Federal Republic.

But Joffe's optimism is qualified. One of the historical conditions that no longer applies to Germany, after all, is the stable postwar order that shaped today's benign



A U.S. cartoonist found the reunification of Germany a laughing matter. Few Europeans take the prospective marriage so lightly.

West Germany. American dominance within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization provided "a power greater than all of [the Western European powers] that could ensure each against the perils of cooperation." All of this is now dissolving, and European rivalries are bound to revive. Joffe suggests that competition will be peaceful: "The battle lines are drawn in the balance-of-payments ledgers, and the accounts are settled with ECU's (the European Community internal currency), not with blood and iron." Still, he gives only "even odds, no more" that Germany will not become "a strange and eerie place."

The Dirty Wars of The Enlightenment

"War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1871" by Armstrong Starkey, in *War and Society* (May 1990), Univ. of New South Wales, Australian Defence Force Academy, Campbell, ACT 2600, Australia.

"Gentlemen of the French Guards, fire first!" This famous invitation was issued by Captain Lord Charles Hay as British troops advanced on the French at the battle of Fontenoy in 1745. Not to be outdone, the French declined. "One wonders," remarks Starkey, a historian at Adelphi University, "how the killing began."

Such instances of battlefield gallantry have helped create a picture of an 18th-

century interlude of "civilized" warfare sandwiched between the bitter religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries and the devastating nationalist crusades that began with Napoleon. These images of genteel Enlightenment warfare, Starkey contends, are vastly exaggerated. Even Hay's invitation at Fontenoy was in all likelihood only a ploy: The army that received fire first then faced an enemy whose weap-