

state would seize whatever they earned.

"If Russians are too passive to assert their will against the entrenched political establishment, one would scarcely expect them to form independent groups to press their demands," Starr notes. Yet that is just what has happened in recent years, as thousands of lobbying clubs and associations of all types have been set up. Labor has established independent unions, many patterned on Poland's Solidarity. Lawyers, journalists, and other professionals also have organized their own groups. Independent political parties have already come to power in most non-Russian republics, and organization is proceeding rapidly in the far-flung territory of the Russian Republic.

Despite "the stereotypical images advanced by those in Russia and the West who are eager to justify the Kremlin's new authoritarianism as a necessary evil," Starr says, there is "ample evidence that Rus-



Unlike these supposed Soviet heroes of production in Natalia Levitina's "The 'Vanguard' of Perestroika," many Russians have ample capacity for independent initiative, says historian Starr.

sians, freed from fear, possess as much initiative and capacity for independent action as do members of other developed societies in Europe, Asia, and the Americas." The West, he says, should accept "at face value" the democratic movement in the Soviet Union, not "belittle it simply because it has not, in a mere five years, triumphed completely over the old system."

Premature Reunification

German reunification, finally accomplished in 1990, might have come about almost four decades earlier. Heilbrunn, a writer and former assistant editor at the *National Interest*, says that it was probably a good thing that it did not.

On March 10, 1952, Soviet leader Josef Stalin sent a note to the U.S., British, and French governments, in which he proposed creation of a unified, neutral Germany. Could this proposal, asks Heilbrunn, have been an opportunity to unify Germany on minimally acceptable terms, one that, had it been seized, might have spared East Germans nearly four decades of totalitarian rule?

"Germany and the Cold War: An Inquest" by Jacob E. Heilbrunn, in *Global Affairs* (Summer 1991), International Security Council, 1155 15th St. N.W., Ste. 502, Washington, D.C. 20005.

The allies at the time looked upon Stalin's note with great suspicion, seeing in it a tactical move to block formation of the European Defense Community. Yet the U.S. State Department and Britain's Whitehall took the dictator's proposal seriously. When Stalin later in the month advanced a revised version, the State Department Policy Planning Staff commented that "It would be unwise to assume that the note is only a propaganda move."

Kurt Schumacher, leader of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), enthusiastically agreed. He wanted to see "an independent, unified Germany—and unified precisely *because* it was independent."

Heilbrunn says. "Schumacher was pro-Western, but . . . he was convinced that by championing social democracy, the SPD could bring the eastern zone into its orbit . . . A unified, democratic Germany would jockey for advantage between East and West." He therefore was eager to see the allies enter negotiations to create such a Germany.

West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer of the Christian Democratic Union viewed Stalin's proposal with alarm, and he persuaded the allies to rebuff it. According to Heilbrunn, Adenauer told the Americans that even to agree to a conference with the Soviets on the subject "would open the door to bringing Germany into the Soviet orbit." The chancellor "had no confidence in the German people," observed Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, head of the British Foreign Office in the 1950s. As a result, he "felt that the integration of Western Germany with the West was more important than the unification of Germany."

In the view of German historian Rolf Steininger, Adenauer thus lost a chance to find out whether it was possible then to have "a Germany united in freedom." But Heilbrunn says that while Adenauer's rejection of Stalin's offer was indeed "a turning point," the reasoning behind it was sound.

"Adenauer spurned negotiations," Heilbrunn writes, "not because he rejected unification *per se*—it remained the official aim of the [Federal Republic of Germany] and was enshrined in the preamble to its *Grundgesetz*, or Basic Law—

Vargas Llosa's Lament

Although novelist Mario Vargas Llosa was a strong candidate, he was defeated last year in his bid to become president of Peru. His larger purpose, however, had been to get across to Peruvians his ideas about political and economic freedom, and about creating a truly free society. In *Granta* 36 (Summer 1991), Vargas Llosa, a former Wilson Center Fellow, ponders the impact of ideas in politics.

To what extent did we manage to make ideas put down roots among libertarians? To what extent did the Peruvians who voted for me vote for liberal ideas? I don't know. These are doubts that I would like very much to clear up, since they hold the key to whether the effort of these years was useless or worthwhile.

I had already seen that ideas mattered little . . . that real politics, not the kind that one reads and writes and thinks about—the only sort that I had been acquainted with—but the politics that is lived and practiced day by day, has little to do with ideas, values and imagination, with long-range visions, with notions of an ideal society, with generosity, solidarity or idealism. It consists almost exclusively of maneuvers, intrigues, plots, pacts, paranoias, betrayals, a great deal of calculation, no little cynicism and every variety of con game. What really gets professional politicians moving, whether of the center, the left or the right, what excites them and drives them on, is power: attaining it, remaining in it or returning to it as soon as possible. There are exceptions, of course, but they are just that: exceptions. Many politicians begin their careers impelled by altruistic sentiments, by the desire to change society, promote justice, improve the standard of living. But along the way, in the petty, pedestrian practice that politics is, the fine objectives cease to exist, become mere commonplaces of speeches and programs. Anyone who is not capable of feeling the obsessive, almost physical attraction to power finds it nearly impossible to be a successful politician.

No, finally, I don't believe that I succeeded in putting across what I wanted to. Peruvians did not vote for ideas in the elections . . . [The] weekly polls always showed that the candidate who was attracting voters was doing so on the basis of his personality or out of some mysterious impulse: never on account of the program on offer.

but because, unlike Schumacher, he understood that the German problem could not be solved in isolation from a solution for Eastern Europe and because he foresaw circumstances in which German unification would come about in a manner much more advantageous for Germany and Europe." Nearly four decades later, events seem to have proved that Adenauer was right.